Boards of Trustees:

Finding A Home In Tomorrow's Schools

(Too busy managing to govern and
too busy governing to manage)

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Abstract

The aims of this study were: to examine how boards of trustees were making sense of the changes in educational administration which were the result of reforms initiated by the *Picot Report* and known as *Tomorrow's Schools;* and to analyse data in terms of the policy sociology literature with the intention of elaborating on the connections between the macro and micro levels of policy development and implementation.

This was achieved by attending boards of trustees' meetings at five primary schools during 1991 and conducting supplementary interviews in order to collect qualitative data for analysis. The six major areas of activity which were derived from the data were the areas of finance management, property management, community relationships, educational objectives, personnel management, and governance. Further analysis revealed four major themes: an expectation that reforms would be structured; that the trustees would be supported in the new environment; that the new system involved equal partnerships with shared responsibilities; and that the trustees were elected to meet school needs. These four themes collectively reflected the trustees' expectations about their role of governance.

The data was then integrated with other substantive findings about *Tomorrow's Schools* and used to develop a model of board expectations about their role of governance. A feature of the model was that many of the same terms used to describe the relationship between the Ministry of Education and the boards of trustees, at the macro-level of analysis, were also used, at the micro-level of analysis, to describe the relationship between the board, staff and community, yet the terms have different meanings at each level. This model was then evaluated in terms of Gidden's (1984) theory of structuration.

The results reveal how trustees were actively engaged in mediating the policy process and indicated that people at the "top" did not have complete control over policy implementation. The boards were able to operationalise their own definitions of governance - management, which was based on trust and co-operation, in order to meet their schools' needs.

This was despite the Ministry adopting a more directive "top-down" approach in its relationship with boards, which reflected the principles within agency theory.

This study makes a contribution to the area of policy sociology by revealing how policies alter their meanings, for the different people involved, and mutate as they descend different social levels. Overall the model developed was successful in indicating how the macro and micro levels interact during the process of administrative reform. There are limits, however, to the value of the model until it is tested drawing on a larger number of boards. In the meantime it is useful as a heuristic device for developing hypotheses about the role of boards in the governance of schools.

Acknowledgements

This thesis may have my name on the front but that does not reflect the many and varied contributions to its construction. It would not have reached this final form without the many hours of work put in by my sister **Nadine Gaffney**.

This study has developed its own history and I am grateful to my supervisor **Dr Peter Rich** for being there from the beginning and seeing it through until the end. For if there was a problem, he was willing to listen and if there was a dilemma that needed some thought he would come back to me with some ideas.

Within the covers you will find stories of **trustees** achieving great things for their school and children. I am thankful that these people were able to accommodate me by giving of their time and sharing openly about their experiences, both the good and the bad.

I wish to acknowledge the support provided by the people in the **Education Department at Otago University**. The inquiries into my progress and the encouragement to make it happen were all appreciated. There were those who made it possible for me to continue studying by providing paid employment, without which you would not be reading this now.

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List of Abbreviations

BoT .....Board of Trustees

ERO .....Education Review Office

MTSP .....Monitoring Today's Schools Project

NZCER .....New Zealand Council for Educational Research

NZEI .....New Zealand Educational Institute

POD .....Property Occupancy Document

PTA .....Parent Teacher Association

SES ..... Special Education Service

STA ..... School Trustees Association

Preface

On the 21st July 1987 the Review of Educational Administration Taskforce was set up to examine:

(i) the functions of the Head Office of the Department of Education with a view to focusing them more sharply and delegating responsibilities as far as is practicable;

(ii) the work of polytechnic and community college councils, teachers college councils, secondary school boards and school committees with a view to increasing their powers and responsibilities;

(iii) the Department's role in relation to other educational services;

(iv) changes in the territorial organization of public education with reference to the future roles of education boards, other education authorities, and the regional offices of the Department of Education; and

(v) any other aspects that warrant review.

(Taskforce to Review Educational Administration, 1988, pIX)

In April 1988 as a result of its investigation, the Taskforce produced a report entitled *Administering for Excellence: Effective Administration in Education*. This document referred to as the Picot Report outlined a blueprint that would radically change the nature of schooling in New Zealand. The new system came into existence on the 1st October, 1989. The Taskforce proclaimed:

> We have proposed changes in the administration of education which will require marked changes in structures and organizations. These will significantly affect many people working in the education system and will have a major impact on people working for the education boards and the Department of Education. (Taskforce to Review Educational Administration, 1988, p81).

Given the possible wide ranging effects of such changes submissions were called for in response to the document to allow some refinements to be made. Subsequently *Tomorrow's Schools* was published in August, 1988, (Lange, 1988). It stated that from the more than 20,000 submissions received most believed there was a need for reform.

David Lange, the Prime Minister, in writing the introduction to *Tomorrow's Schools* states that:

> The Government is certain that the reform it proposes will result in more immediate delivery of resources to schools, more parental and community involvement, and greater teacher responsibility. It will lead to improved learning opportunities for the children of this country. The reformed administration will be sufficiently flexible and responsive to meet the particular needs of Maori education. (Lange, 1988, pIV)

Tomorrow's Schools is a statement of Government intent. It broadly outlines how schools would be administered at the local level; describes the various central agencies; how national standards would be administered; how some of the practical issues of schooling would be handled; and how the transition would be made.

The last section, describing how changes would be made, is the shortest and reflects how many decisions about the change process had not been finalized. An implementation unit was set up made up of 13 working groups which attempted to clarify the finer details of how the changes were to take place. These groups were instructed to report back by 19 December 1988. Voting for the new Board of Trustees for each school took place in May of 1989 with these groups taking office as of October 1st, 1989.

This was a significant date for many people as whole organizations within the education system were disbanded and new ones created. At this time the large scale structural changes were occurring in a school's external environment rather than within a school's administration itself, with the possible exception of the introduction of the Boards of Trustees.

Rationale for this Study

With any change there is conjecture about how successful it will be. People will attempt to identify the pros and cons in advance in order to bring about successful implementation of policy. In this era of change in educational administration there are many claims and counterclaims to why the change would be destructive or constructive. Given the radical nature of the changes advocated and the rapidity in the way they were to be implemented there is little background research to draw upon. It is only by making detailed and systematic study that some of these issues can be clarified in order to inform debate which would otherwise seem to remain opinionated. During the period since the changes were first

initiated other studies have been made and this one will contribute to the small but growing literature that describes the "unique" reforms underway in New Zealand.

The Aims of this Study

The general purpose of this study is to describe how five local Boards of Trustees make sense of their new roles within the changing educational administrative framework in New Zealand. A lot of the content in this thesis is taken up by providing this pictorial account which is provided as a record of activity rather than necessary for subsequent analysis.
The specific aims are:

(i) to describe how boards of trustees are working within six areas of: finance, property, community relationships, educational objectives and policy, personnel, and governance; and

(ii) to analyse the boards' activities within these areas in terms of micro policy and use it to elaborate on the macro policy that brought them into being.

Outline of Thesis

The first chapter will outline the substantive New Zealand material in the area of educational adminstration especially since the changes that took place in 1989. Chapter 2 is a development of the literature that focuses on the Macro-Micro dilemma in educational policy. Chapter 3 outlines the method used to gather data. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 presents the results. Chapter 7 involves elaborating on the themes emerging from the three results chapters and the initial formulation of a model to account for the trustees experiences. Chapter 8 draws on the themes from chapter 7 and compares them with the substantive research findings presented in chapter 1. Chapter 9 concludes the study by further elaborating on the model developed in chapter 7 and considering its contribution to the area of policy sociology.

There are many doors opened in this study which are never stepped through which can give a disjointed feeling when reading. At the same time there is a lot of ground covered. For this reason it may be better to browse and find your own way through. One can start at either chapter 1 or 2. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 form a section on their own. Yet it would be possible to start from chapter 7 and still have a feel for how the later chapters developed without needing to have read chapters 4, 5, 6.

Chapter 1

Introduction

This chapter will review the research undertaken in New Zealand to examine the reforms in educational administration that were instigated as a result of the findings from the *Picot Report*. (Taskforce to Review Educational Administration, 1988). In particular it will focus on school management and the role of boards of trustees in that activity. The reason for restricting this chapter to New Zealand material while ignoring overseas studies is done for the purpose of leaving room to provide detailed information about the same reforms that will be examined in this study. This information will contribute significantly later chapters. As such the material reviewed is a description of findings rather than a detailed thematic analysis. This will allow these findings to be integrated with the findings of this study later in chapter 7.

The newly formed Ministry of Education that came into being in 1989 has provided funding for a number of research projects to study the changes occurring in educational administration. By far the largest was the Monitoring Today's Schools Project undertaken by a team of researchers who for the most part were based at Waikato University. The project focused intensively on 14-17 schools over a three year period examining the effects of the reforms on a range of areas. The team under the leadership of David Mitchell have produced 17 reports over the two year period from September 1990 to November 1992. The final report summarised the results of the project and elaborated on the findings (Mitchell, McGee, Moltzen & Oliver, 1993).

The New Zealand Council for Educational Research was contracted to conduct a longitudinal survey study of the Impact of Tomorrow's Schools in Primary Schools and Intermediates (Wylie, 1990, 1991 & 1992c). This study sent out a postal questionnaire to principals, trustees, and teachers to approximately one per cent of the primary and intermediate schools in New Zealand. Questionnaires were also sent out to all parents at 10 per cent of the first sample.

Liz Gordon at the University of Canterbury has undertaken research to study the 'work of boards of trustees' in a number of projects centred on schools in Christchurch and Canterbury. The first project conducted in 1992 'examined the work of boards of trustees in ten Christchurch schools over a one month period' (Gordon, Boyask, & Pearce, 1994). This was followed-up by an in-depth study of 4 schools in the city of Christchurch.

Monitoring Today's Schools Project

The final report (Mitchell, 1993) examines five of the major themes which run through the results of the other 16 reports. They were: choice and devolution; parents as governors; continuity with the past; impact on the quality of education; and the reform process.

Choice and devolution

Choice was identified as the key to improving educational provision by the Picot Report. This choice included the ability of parents to choose which school their children attend as well as parents having some input into the administration of the schools that their children attend. The process by which choice was to be structured into the new educational administration was by a process of devolution. In reality the devolution was more a process of decentralisation, where a higher authority delegates tasks to lower levels, whereas theoretically devolution "involves a more genuine transfer of power from the centre" (p. 112). The report authors recognise that the delegation is never complete but must be examined issue by issue to see that the amount of decentralisation is continually changing. The question then arises as to whether there is a correct balance of decentralisation that reflects the right amount of power held by the centre and the schools. There was an indication that schools regarded the level of autonomy achieved by the reforms by 1991 was acceptable.

Parents as governors

The final report also refers to the shift in power within institutions and refer to the critics that thought this may have disadvantages created by certain groups being over represented on boards of Trustees. Reference was made to the possibility of "board capture" that might lead to tension between the professionals and the parents but they found no evidence of this. If anything the types of people elected to boards were very similar to

the professionals decreasing the chance of boards holding differing view from teachers about schooling.

They report that there was considerable resistance by principals in the study to the idea of trustees having responsibility for curriculum matters yet the School Trustees Association (STA) was actively advocating such a stance. However, while trustees wanted to discuss educational issues and have an input they also felt that the curriculum was a responsibility of the teachers.

The report identifies the important role of the principal in bringing the teachers and trustees together. Yet during the reforms they have been placed under the most pressure. Early attempts at resolving possible sources of tension between boards and principals were made by trying to distinguish between governance and management so that the principals and trustees would have different roles. The outcome, however, was that boards and principals developed "local rules" to suite each institutions efforts to "get things done".

Continuity with the past

The authors of the report point to links with past educational practises, trends and proposals for change. Many reports and committees from the 1970s and 1980s had called for or suggested a range of changes to educational administration, often because of dissatisfaction with the current systems of the time. The writers claim that there has always been parent involvement in education but it was the changes recently instigated that allowed it to take new forms. Their review of overseas material suggests that the focus on equity and equal employment opportunities is a distinctive feature in New Zealand not to be found elsewhere.

Impact on the quality of education

The intention of the reforms was to set the stage for improvements in learning but they would not be a direct outcome. The evidence from the study supports this intention when it found there had been a minimal effect on children's learning as a result of the reforms. In fact, if anything, there was some evidence of a negative impact based on the teachers claims that the increased administrative duties were taking them away from classroom work. Towards the end of the study there was a change noted

with some people indicating that the policies developed in the school were starting to have affect teaching.

In their analysis of the *Picot Report* the writers identify the dependent variable of improved learning is believed to be dependent on two main factors, the learning institution's clarity of purpose and its control of resources. Other important independent variables cited were informed choice, an institution's accountability for meeting objectives, customer involvement in decision-making, and schools' "openness and responsiveness" to parent demands. The mediating variables listed included members of schools having the qualities of single mindedness, imagination, commitment, initiative, energy, and enthusiasm. Two negative mediating variables were the fear of student withdrawal and negative evaluations by external agencies. Many of these factors reflect the influence of public choice theory that pervaded the public sector at the time of the reforms.

The impact on the quality of education is likely to depend on the "second wave" of reforms that are about to arrive based on the aims of the New Zealand Curriculum Framework. This framework will provide the direction that the first wave of reforms may facilitate or distract their achievement.

The reform process

> The respondents in the MTSP study were generally quite critical of the way in which several aspects of the reforms were implemented. There criticisms centred on the inadequacies of the information flow, excessive demands on participants, and poor resourcing of new developments. (Mitchell, McGee, Moltzen, & Oliver, 1993, p. 122)

This was in addition to other issues identified in the study as creating difficulties for an efficient change process. The first issue was a "lack of clear identity" of the new Ministry of Education and other agencies created since the reforms. The second was the high workload created by the reforms, especially for principals. The next issue was the inadequate resourcing which could have been reduced by more piloting. The fourth issue was the simultaneous introduction of complex sets of demands which placed a heavy demand on trustees. Lastly the ownership of the reforms is probably what made success for trustees possible but the report

writers highlight that those with little ownership - the teachers, students and non-trustee parents have not been so impressed by the changes which indicates a possible cause for concern given that they will be central to the second wave of reforms about to be implemented - the curriculum innovation.

A description of other MTSP reports[1]

Many of the other reports in the MTSP contain findings of interest to the current study, but some more than others. This section will consider some of the reports in more detail depending on what they may contribute in terms of an understanding of the boards of trustees.

The first report from the project team studied the schools as they went through the process of elections and the boards coming together for the first time, electing chairpersons and making co-options (Harold & McConnell, 1990). Issues which were highlighted included the flow of information so schools could keep to the required time frame. The biggest issue for boards appeared to be the co-option of other parent representatives onto the board. The *Education Act* 1989 and the *Governing Schools Handbook* (Department of Education, 1989) both indicated that co-option should be used to reflect the ethnic, socio-economic and gender ratios in the community. In addition the handbook also included giving consideration to "the type of skills needed to function effectively" (Department of Education, 1989, ch. 2, p. 1). The project researchers noted that boards were struggling over who should be co-opted and on what basis and also how soon should the co-options be made.

The second report called *Who Governs Our Schools* (Middleton & Oliver, 1990) follows up on the theme of representation and equity indicating the difficulties of devolving a responsibility mandated from the central authority - Department of Education/Ministry of Education. There was also an attempt to see what experiences and ideas of education the board members were drawing on with consideration given to how this might effect their working together in providing school leadership. Of interest in

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[1] A list of the other sixteeen reports from this study may be found in Mitchell et al. (1993).

the report was the comment that a broad range of opinions and beliefs were held upon a range of issues which should pose interesting problems for boards trying to reach a consensus in decision making.

The third report (Hall & McGee, 1991) considers the process whereby schools developed their charters, the main activity for the new board[2]. This was meant to be completed by October 1989 although this was later extended until mid-November. This would seem like a large task but when looking at the charter framework which is provided in *Governing Schools: A practical handbook for school trustees* (Department of Education, 1989) there are only four elements from 32 headings that the boards had to complete and one of those was optional. The Ministry did not start approving boards' charters until 1990 and by the end of 1990 charters from 75 per cent of schools had been approved. This was despite the changes made by the Minister of Education to the charters after many had been signed. Other material was subsequently released in the *Education Gazette* such as the *National Education Guidelines* (O'Rourke, 1993).

One of the continuing themes highlighted by people was that the changes were too rushed. For schools this happened in the lead up to elections where people were not receiving accurate information on how to run them including the criteria for accepting nominations. Some people had to stand down when it was discovered only those with permanent citizenship were allowed to be elected (Harold & McConnell, 1990). The perception that changes were happening too fast continued with the development of charters by boards. Assurances that training would be provided, was not followed through in the sense that the training provided did not meet the needs and challenges that the trustees were facing. Seminars were arranged by colleges of education and inspectors from the Department of Education but were not described as helpful.

> There had been an expectation created by television publicity, prior to the elections of the trustees, that training would be provided. This was interpreted by many trustees

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[2]This report is important because it describes a range of perceptions and expectations about the external agencies involved in the reforms, and so it will be allocated more space that most of the other reports.

> to mean that the tasks of trustees, such as charter development had been carefully thought through and that trustees would be told explicitly what to do and how to do it. In reality, no one was experienced in the task as it had never been undertaken before and those running the seminars focused principally upon interpreting statements in the handbook for trustees and explaining what a charter was (Hall & McGee, 1991).

As a result many thought the best preparation was studying the *Governing Schools Handbook* or discussing the tasks with other boards in cluster groups. There were mixed reactions as to the purpose of the charter, some seeing is as a means of control from Wellington while others saw it as an opportunity for the community to develop the purpose of the school. Most trustees recognised the charter as a legal agreement between schools and the Ministry to provide the best possible schooling for children. For others the focus was the agreement between the school and the community. Two of the sixteen boards were reluctant to develop charters as they were not convinced of their necessity.

A coping strategy for many boards in dealing with the 'paper war' and the 'tight' time frame was to rely on the principal and senior staff for initiative in charter development. One of the first challenges in consulting the community in developing a charter was the difficulty in deciding who had membership of the school community. Many primary schools, following the lead from elections, considered the families and parents were the community - those who elected representatives. Some of the secondary schools allowed for a more liberal interpretation. Many of the schools consulted contributing schools but none of the schools serving the same 'community' consulted together.

Many of the schools used questionnaires as their first form of consultation with the primary schools having a better return rate - some as much as 90 per cent - than the secondary schools who had return rates as low as 10 per cent. Over a period of time responses to various forms of consultation waned. Consultations on drafts produced very little response. Explanations offered suggested that smaller schools had more clearly defined communities plus primary school districts were more homogeneous in their nature compared to secondary schools that have

large catchment areas in terms of socio-economic levels as well as rural-urban mixes.

In terms of the content of the charters researchers found that the more a school individualised the charter the more it signalled ownership and thus the likelihood that it would have some impact on school culture and educational direction. The capacity to complete the task competently was observed to depend on four qualities: enthusiasm; skills available; leadership qualities amongst those who understood the exercise; and the quality of teamwork amongst those working on the task. The lack of resources to work through the process made things difficult and when combined with a lack of skills within some groups meant that the principals had to accept a lot of the responsibility. Their ability to recognise skills and delegate was a critical coping strategy.

Each school was assigned a liaison officer within the new Ministry who would oversee the approval of the charter. In some cases this would include taking it back to the school for more development. This was because certain sections had been omitted. They would also point out what might seem like difficult objectives to achieve given that in a few years they would be expected to show that they had met all objectives within the charter. During the process of approval three significant changes were made to the charter framework by the Minister of Education.

(a) The charter was redefined as an 'undertaking' rather than an 'agreement'.

(b) The Ministerial commitment to fund schools was removed.

(c) The 'paramount principle' was deleted.[3]

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[3]The paramount principle was the main feature of the charter outlining the guiding principles which provided direction to the boards.

> The needs of children and their learning shall be paramount. Therefore, the Boards of Trustees will ensure that all students are given an education which respects their dignity, rights and individuality. *This education shall challenge them to achieve personal*

The announcement was made by the Minister of Education during the school vacation. Later, in March, in the light of negative public reactions from the fledgling School Trustees Association (STA) and many boards of trustees, he justified the lack of consultation on the grounds that

> Because they were only technical changes, a process of consultation was not entered into beforehand by the Ministry (letter to school trustees, March 1990, cited in Hall, 1991, p. 39).

However, in the same letter, he admitted that "with the benefit of hindsight, this was a mistake".

There was later acknowledgement that the changes were based on advice from legal advisers rather than policy makers. In April the Minister negotiated some more changes with the School Trustees Association, which placed the phrase 'needs of children and their learning' from the deleted paramount principle and reinserted it as the focus of the charter placed on the front page. It also included the following clarifications:

> This will be achieved through a partnership between the school, its community and the Minister under the provisions of the *Education Act*.
>
> The Board of Trustees will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school meets the goals and objectives of this charter within the resources and time available to it (Hall & McGee, 1991, p. 83).

Most of the trustees in the study viewed these changes negatively given that they had considered the charter a legal document but the change in terminology from "agreement" to "undertaking" and the removal of responsibility for the Minister to provide funding for schools to meet agreed objectives saw people express with suspicion the motives behind the changes. For secondary schools the expectations that they might have "to deliver nationally required educational outcomes with reduced resources" was difficult to accept (Hall & McGee, 1991, p. 40). For many trustees the paramount principle reflected the very essence of why they had stood for election in the first place and so to remove it was like changing the nature of the boards of trustees. Some schools reinserted the

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standards of excellence and to reach their full potential. All school activities will be designed to advance these purposes. (Department of Education, 1989, Charter framework p. 5)

principle as a local goal. Others felt the addition in April of a 'focus of the charter' statement went some way toward correcting the deletion but at the same time it

> reinforced impressions of bureaucratic bungling, continuing changes to the rules, and political gamesmanship in which conditions were lost and then regained under protest. It appeared, under the prevailing circumstances, that few trustees appreciated the need for the Ministry to change sections of the charter in order to be consistent with sections of the Education Amendment Bill which had been drafted after the initial charter framework (Hall & McGee, 1991, p. 41).

However, this explanation does not clarify why the *Education Amendment Act*[4] was needed if the *Education Act* 1989 had been drafted properly in the first place. This once again supports the view that the changes were made too fast, not just at the school level but centrally as well.

A number of boards had attempted to insert elements within the charter that they were then asked to change. Schools generally did under the threat that funding would be withheld until they did. Some schools would not make all the changes, resubmit the charter and see if it would get through. For one school this was successful. Another threat used was the withholding of approval of courses for the following year. Much of the frustration and anger generated, as a result, was redirected at Ministry liaison officers and other people in Ministry district offices. One manager described herself as the "puppet of Wellington" (Hall & McGee, 1991, p. 41).

For some schools a form of protest was to refuse to sign their charter. Once again the threat of withholding funding usually brought about compliance. After April 1990 schools started to hold formal signing ceremonies. In Hamilton, where 26 schools held a public charter-signing ceremony, the Minister of Education made the comment that the government had "learned the hard way that you don't go about *Tomorrow's Schools* using yesterday's methods" and that "you don't tamper

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[4]There were five Education Amendment Acts through to mid 1991 after the Education Act 1989.

with a community's decisions" (Hall & McGee, 1991, p. 42). Some schools, however, declined invitations to public ceremonies.

A lot of work was done in the 18 months that followed *Tomorrow's Schools* but given that few people had experience in the tasks undertaken the pace and manner of change created difficulties which many would rather have done without. Consultation was not new, however, and two of the sample schools who had taken part in the Curriculum Review Exploratory Study had benefited from the systems and experiences gained from that work.[5] It should be noted that it was during the charter process that there was a change in the Minister of Education within the Labour Government which would complicate matters and at the end of 1990 there was a change in government.

The other major activity of boards at the time was preparing asset registers and budgets. The first year this was done the boards had no previous information to work with and the changes to the terminology in the charters added to the insecurity of the boards at this time. Just prior to the change-over there was some doubt about the adequacy of the funding that each school would receive. One school actually included a paragraph in their charter saying that having calculated a shortfall for the coming year the board could not guarantee to achieve all charter objectives. The Ministry convinced the board to take the paragraph out and include it as a covering letter.[6]

One of the consequences for many boards was that they felt overwhelmed doing only the compulsory parts of the charter. But the work had not been finished when the charter was signed. Having completed the charter development the boards now had to consider the implementation and

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[5]This project had focused on involving parents and teachers in decision-making in matters of curriculum within schools.

[6]In addition to funding issues, in the political background was the Lough Committee working on the report *Today's Schools* which was released in April, 1990 (Education Reform Implementation Process Team, 1990). The report repeated many of the same findings being described in this section.

review of the charter in the form of policy. To maintain boards on-going commitment to these tasks the Education Review Office was developing systems for the schools' first reviews which would assess the boards abilities to meet charter requirements. Reviews were to begin in February 1991. It may be that many schools will be uncertain as to the exact criteria that the Education Review Office will use in its *Assurance Audits* and *Effectiveness Reviews.*

One of the issues identified by the study was what constitutes consultation. Five levels of consultation had been identified from previous research. They were: informing parents about what is happening; taking part in activities in a limited way such as attending meetings with speakers or responding to questionnaires; exchanging views; helping make decisions; through to having responsibility for action and so becoming involved in planning and evaluating school programmes (Ramsay, Hawk, Harold, Marriott, & Poskitt, 1993). Researchers noted that most boards reached levels 3 to 5 in their consultation with the majority operating at level four.

Another feature of the study was its consideration of the role of the principal in working with the boards in the development of the charter. Researchers noted that some boards, who were less confident, continually turned to the principal for advice on how to proceed on the basis that the principal knows about education and therefore is the person most likely to know what should be happening. Many of the principals were reluctant leaders and would usually use opportunities to give leadership back to the parent trustees.

The importance of the charter in relation to the implementation of *Tomorrow's Schools* was identified as significant because it formed the basis of the agreement between the new Ministry and each board The process of negotiation and development shaped the future relationship between the Ministry and the boards and, as the charter was the first major task undertaken by trustees, it became formative in moulding their working relationships with each other. The potential for things to go wrong, even if in only a small percentage of the 2500 schools in New Zealand, could have a long term effect on schools and the new Ministry.

From my own perspective, in terms of assessing the process as educational innovation, there are many aspects that could be considered deficient. Many of the trustees were convinced of the need for change and were committed to making it happen. However, expectations of the type of change that was to be instigated were not matched in reality - trustees did not have as much input to the charter as they would have liked - and the process by which it did occur also did not match expectations - the trustees had been expecting high quality training to lead them through the exercise. The perceptions of "bureaucratic bungling" indicated there had not been sufficient planning and preparation. This was highlighted by the number of changes to the charter made by the Minister of Education part way through the exercise of charter development. The timing and pace demanded were seen as too rushed for "efficient" change and other "necessary" resources had not been made available. Large amounts of information was supplied to schools on a number of issues at the same time as the boards were getting to know each other, as well as develop budgets for the coming year. On top of this they were expected to learn how to consult with the community, which for most was a new experience. Another example of the pace of change being too quick was the resultant stress placed on principals which came from combined tasks of (1) additional new activities; and (2) the continuation of their "regular" activities.

A large component of resourcing is the support that may have been provided to schools but was not. Without trials to find out what supports and resources would be necessary, without waiting to use the research that was becoming available in regard to consultation, and without a period of transition from the old Department of Education to the new Ministry, many of the people resources who could have provided help were lost at a time when they could have been an agent of change. It may have been more appropriate to have the liaison officers who went through the charter approval process with schools enter the scene earlier and act as 'change agents' or facilitators.

So in terms of the significance of the whole exercise, despite the initial enthusiasm for what was happening, the fact that some schools felt they were under duress to complete their charters to fit Ministry 'guidelines', that cynicism developed amongst boards that the charter was another

form of centralised control, especially when the amendments were made, and that the Ministry came to be seen as the 'evil outsider', it is likely to have an ongoing negative impact on the future relationships between schools and the Ministry. As a form of educational innovation this in itself may make the change a failure. For those boards that could move beyond these negatives, the challenge of developing the charter could help to bring the boards together as a working group very quickly. And as social psychologists have shown, the 'evil outsider' is very effective in encouraging a group with internal tensions to pull together to obtain goals. This outcome may not be desirable for the Ministry as it needs to continue to work with boards as will be shown in relation to the Ministry's negotiation with boards in regard to their property occupancy documents.

The report *Charters and Policies* (Mansell, 1992) was a follow up to the *Charter* report described above (Hall & McGee, 1991). This specific report was to survey the 15 schools to find out about what use they had made of their charters since their approval. With the charters developed and approved many boards were soon busy developing policies before there first review. The workload pressure, which these types of tasks were creating, was acknowledged in the *Lough Report* formally called *Today's Schools* (Education Reform Implementation Process Team, 1990). The follow up booklet that resulted called *Governance and Management* (Principals' Implementation Task Force, 1990) advised boards to consider policy writing "as a long term process spread out over several years as the need arises. They should not feel under pressure to write all their policy statements within a certain time" (p3). This supports the Christchurch school in Gordon et al.'s (1994) study who took this approach even though it was perceived as failing to comply with expectations of the Ministry. This same booklet assigned the roles of policy writing to the board and the development and monitoring of resultant programmes to staff.

The charter has come to be seen as the general basis and reference point for policies reflecting the philosophy based on student needs. This had been present prior to the reforms but was now formalised. The policies were in some way seen as replacing the school schemes that teachers had previously used in implementing curriculum. The charter had played a key role for those boards that had been reviewed by the Education Review Office. The charter was not so important in staff appointments but did

influence teaching programmes according to many teachers especially those in primary schools. Principals were using parts of the charter in their publicity. Most teachers and principals 'accorded the charter high status as the focus of the school' (p. 37). The trustees were not so convinced believing it to be important but as guidelines rather than rules.

The boards have often taken the role of approving policy that may often have started with the principal or teacher or sub-committee. Most trustees saw the principal as having the role of monitoring and evaluation of policy. Primary trustees in particular felt they could monitor informally what was happening by visiting school and talking to parents. This was similar to Gordon et al.'s (1994) findings. Trustees expressed a trust in the professionalism of teachers to ensure children's needs were being met. More recently the Education Review Office has been critical of the number of trustees who do not have a good understanding of the curriculum policies in place in their school.(Johnston, 1994e, p. 4)

Overall the development of charter and policy reflect the difficulty in maintaining a distinction between governance and management. This is the topic for a report with the same name(Barrington, 1992). The difficulty and importance of boards governing and principals managing was an issue raised in the *Lough Report* (Ministry of Education, 1990). In practice there was a range of approaches taken to implementing the idea.

Over half the trustees and a large majority of principals thought they had a clear idea of the distinction between governance and management. In practice most felt that the distinction was working well practically but noticeably the principals were more convinced of this than the trustees. The *Governance - Management* report noted that one of the positive outcomes of governance and management in schools was the greater ability to make decisions and respond quickly to local needs. One of the negative aspects was the increased workloads for principals. Many of the respondents who were positive about the changes also recognised that there had been negative outcomes.

One area where there was an equal split of responses was that of parent control over education. One third of principals thought that there had been an increase, one third felt that opportunities for control were there

but few had taken them and another third had felt that there had been no change. The report writers feel that the difference between governance and management is blurred either because of a lack of training for trustees or that as Mansell has suggested that "the distinction lacks a utility in practice" (Barrington, 1992, p. 41).

The report entitled *The First Year* (McConnell & Jefferies, 1991) provides an overall view of the changes that had occurred in the first year after the boards were given responsibility for running their schools on 1 October 1989. Attention was given to the intention of the report *Tomorrow's Schools* (Lange, 1988) and how they matched actual outcomes in terms of trustees' perceptions.

Notable in terms of the overall responses to the questionnaires is that despite the difficulties acknowledged by the trustees there was an expressed sense of achievement at what had been done. Both principals and staff in the sample schools did not feel as optimistic about the changes and did not express the same sense of achievement as the parent trustees.

The seventh report, *School-Community Relationships* (Harold, 1992) described the nature of the partnership between the schools and their communities. After the trustee elections the development of the charter was the main focus of school community relations as has already been described in the *charter and policies* reports above. People from the 14 schools in the sample were asked to comment on the methods of communication and consultation used by their board and their perceptions of changes in the relationship over time.

Important issues for trustees to discuss and work through was determining what constitutes a schools community. While the *Picot Report* used the term community regularly it was not clearly defined. The community was defined when it came to deciding as the parents and caregivers with New Zealand citizenship who could participate in the board elections. While co-option may have provided a way of including other members of the community, as the report *Who Governs our Schools* (Middleton & Oliver, 1990) revealed, co-options were in the main taken from other parents who polled the next highest in the election after the successful candidates. The definition of "community" was confused in the

interview questions themselves which would often ask interviewees about parents rather than community and thus maybe not opening up the opportunity for people to discuss other community contacts. Prior to 1989 other community members did have opportunities to be represented on school structures via boards of governors, school committees and Education Boards. It was not until the *Education Amendment Act 1991* was passed that the community was redefined to allow non-parent members of the community to join boards. Principals but not trustees and teachers were asked how they would define their school community revealing a far wider interpretation. Six gave geographical references, six responded by saying the people who live in a specific district, one mentioned support agencies associated with the school and another. The principal of a bi-lingual school said the community was Maoridom, anyone who believes in the kaupapa of the school.

Principals said they did not feel their roles had changed in respect of the community but maybe the intensity of the relationship had changed. There was more informing people about what was happening both in terms of consultation and as promotion. In terms of the charter five principals said they were using the definitions of consultation as described in the *Governing Schools handbook* (Department of Education, 1989) and another three had either developed a policy on consultation or were working on one. In the main boards were using the same format as used in developing the charter but with less intensity. Trustees recognised that fewer people were interested in developing policies and one noted that interest had dropped after elections even before consultation had begun on the charter. Some expressed this as parents having taken the time to elect trustees had given the trustees the responsibility for decision-making and thus consultation was no longer necessary. A form of delegation by proxy.

Of interest is that consultation was occurring beyond the formalised approaches often designated by school policy. The informal approaches were seen as just as important if not more important for some trustees who felt that the formal approaches sometimes alienated parents. This would seem to provide a useful alternative as long as consultation did not belong to only those who could access trustees ears. It was the schools in

rural settings or with high numbers of Maori students who found this most useful.

Methods of communication and consultation ranged from newsletters to informal contacts. There were 24 different methods mentioned in total by trustees. Of importance to a number of trustees was the link with the PTA or Home School Association. Another important way of encouraging parents into school was to hold particular school functions, such as sport or social activities. For teachers the most commonly used form of contact with parents was by phone and in the main it was on a regular basis rather than when there were problems to be discussed. There were a wide variety of types of contacts with parents mentioned but in general it was to discuss with parents matters directly relating to their children.

Many trustees thought that there had been no changes since the restructuring in terms of the methods used to consult the community but that there were changes in the effectiveness and regularity of the consultation. One of the negative outcomes noted by one trustee was a diminished interest in the PTA. For the most part, teachers thought the methods of communication were successful. If there was failure it was usually attributed to a lack of interest on the part of parents.

About a third of teachers and trustees felt that more people were being seen at school. There was an accompanying confidence and awareness by parents that they had the opportunity to be involved, and that they were part of the school. That involvement was also being used to draw on skills parents had to contribute to the school independently of the board itself. For many other trustees and teachers however they thought there was no change to the level of involvement of parents in schools.

Six principals noted that parents attended board meetings only occasionally with four stating that parents did not attend meetings. It was usually a specific issue that would attract parents to meetings. They were: uniform changes; suspension cases; concerns about children; the consultation process; complaints about spending of funds; concerns about a teacher; and total immersion (Maori language). Those boards that did have parents attending would usually grant a time for people to speak or

ask questions or are invited to contribute to issues as they arose during a meeting.

The report also described what type of access parents had to board members. For some it was through 'semi-formal' methods such as sub-committee or other meetings such as the PTA, marae or whanau group meetings. The informal methods already mentioned were complemented by a belief by many board members that they were always available. There were a range of responses to the question of how boards handled parent concerns. In general, the larger the school the more formal the procedures.

There were a range of issues that concerned parents which the report divided into two categories. The first, curriculum, included: computer studies; Maori language; religious education; religious beliefs clashing with content; academic standards; and student progress. The second, was organisational issues, which included: uniforms; bus transport; health; road safety; whanau unit; principal appointment; zone enrolments; race issues; school trips; the education 'system'; and recapitation. Most concerns were handled by staff and/or principal and some at board level, especially those with policy implications or considerations.

All but two principals reported contact with other schools in their district. Many found the cluster meetings with other local schools were useful but for some the competitive element was becoming more obvious. For others the co-operation even allowed for the pooling of resources and the use of bulk ordering. Most principals reported some form of promotion being used by the boards and while it had always been present it was described as "gaining momentum". Two of the boards reported inter-trustee contacts.

With all the talk of partnership and collaboration, empowerment and devolution, community relationships in other parts of the system beyond schools were moving in the reverse direction. Funding for community representation on the Education Review Office's review teams was dropped and the Parent Advocacy Council was disbanded. This would have the effect of limiting the amount of information flowing from schools back to the centre within the educational system.

Assessment and Evaluation (Wylie, 1992c) was included as part of the project as an area that was receiving more attention. The *Picot Report* and the *Tomorrows Schools* report made little direct reference to assessment and evaluation of children's learning but the charters gave responsibility for learning within schools to trustees. For trustees, their concern was more for reporting rather than assessment procedures, with many trustees seeing learning as the professional responsibility of the teachers. With the change of government one of the changes in emphasis was the focus on national monitoring and the development of a national curriculum. There was a reluctance to support monitoring especially at the primary and intermediate levels and their was a wariness of its possible use for school comparison.

The *Curriculum and Pedagogy* report (Katterns, 1992) outlines the effects of the reforms in these two particular areas. Many boards felt that their input to the charter was as directive as they would like to be in regard to curriculum leadership in schools. The role of curriculum policy development is in the main seen as the preserve of the professionals, which principals wished to maintain as the status quo. All principals noted the time taken away from curriculum leadership as a result of the demands of the administrative changes. Many described themselves now as school managers given their new 'office bound' role. Also to be noted was that the *Draft National Curriculum of New Zealand* (Ministry of Education, 1991) had just been released at the time data for this report was being gathered. Those people making comments often referred back to the Curriculum Review exercise during the mid 1980s which had been very consultative in comparison to the latest effort which presented the curriculum as a centrally controlled document. Thus here was another aspect of education that was going in the reverse direction of the advocated devolution and consultative approach that people were coming to expect and had seen supported by the *Picot* and *Tomorrow's Schools* reports. And given that consultation had been made not so long ago people were interpreting the new document as a politicised replacement for a review that had been consulted on and accepted by school communities but the government was not willing to follow through.

The MTSP conducted two surveys at the secondary level which was to sample a wider group than the other reports were doing.[7] The *National Survey of Secondary Schools I and II* (Keown, McGee, & Oliver, 1992; McGee, Keown, & Oliver, 1993) was based on sending questionnaire material to 48 randomly selected state or integrated secondary schools from throughout New Zealand. All trustees, principals and a selection of staff, students and non trustee parents were invited to take part.

The main focus of the questionnaires was to examine the following areas: resourcing; school programming; communication and relationships; workloads; charter and policies; trustees; and the perceived impact, and value of, the reforms. (Keown, McGee, & Oliver, 1992, p. 2).

The results indicate that trustees believed improvements had occurred. Communication and school-community partnerships were areas identified by all groups in the sample, where improvements were felt to have occurred. Consultation and the acknowledging of Maori issues have also been seen to have had positive outcomes. The decentralisation of administration was seen as an advantage for the new system although there was less enthusiasm for how this was established via charter and policy writing.

One of the negative outcomes for the sample was in the area of finance which was viewed even more negatively in the second survey. The majority of trustees, teachers and principals were against the idea of bulk funding. Relationships with central educational agencies were seen as less effective and provided minimal support in comparison to the previous structure and this did not change with the second survey. Workloads were also of concern with many identifying the time taken to administer the new system, which was taking time away from professional and curriculum leadership roles, especially for senior and middle management staff within schools. Trustees also felt that their workloads were high given that they were in voluntary positions although they did not perceive *their* workload to be as high as the principals had estimated it to be.

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[7]The NZCER had been given the contract for conducting a similar survey of primary and intermediate schools. (See Wylie, 1990, 1991, 1992a)

Overall most of the principals and trustees felt that the positive gains from the changes had been worth the difficulties. This was supported in the second survey with most trustees reporting satisfaction with their roles. The teachers who have been more removed from the decision-making have more negative views of the changes. And it is the non-trustee parents and students who are placed in the middle ground stating that they believe little has changed.

The MTSP provided a "rich" source of information as well as their summary findings. These will be drawn on extensively when analysing the data from the present study. It is unfortunate that the data was not analysed to see if there were differences between boards based on trustee responses which would account for some of the variation evident in their descriptions

The Impact of Tomorrow's Schools on Primary Schools and Intermediates

The NZCER conducted three surveys with a sample of primary and intermediate schools within New Zealand to complement the surveys being carried out by the MTSP Team. They were conducted at the end of 1989, 1990 and 1991 by sending out questionnaires to 236 state primary and intermediate schools throughout New Zealand. This represented approximately 10 per cent of the total school population (Wylie, 1990; Wylie, 1991; Wylie, 1992a). A summary of the three years findings is presented in Wylie (1992a).

The first major finding reported was that:

> It would seem that the scope of activities of New Zealand school boards of trustees is wider, and less pure, than the very clear split between 'governance' and 'management' envisaged by the Director-General of Education employed as 'change-manager' to implement the reforms. Arguably, this is because of the small size of many New Zealand schools, the lack of administrative personnel and resources within the school itself, the priority given to classroom learning in school budgets, and the very real desire of many trustees to have a practical involvement in their school, with tangible results. (Wylie, 1992a, p. 31)

There are many references here to similar findings described by the MTSP team. It should not be forgotten that Wylie was on the MTSP team and wrote the report on *Assessment and Evaluation,* so the two studies are not completely independent. What is interesting is the accounting for the individualised difference between governance and management in schools based on features not identified by either the MTSP or Gordon et al. (1994). Those features are school size and curriculum budgeting priorities. The other features, such as the desire of trustees to be involved, was confirmed in the other two studies.

The study also found that more than half of the trustees were spending most of their board time on financial management and day-to-day activities. This might account for why trustees do not want to take on bulk funding. One third of them said they had enough to do already or did not want this responsibility.

Another major focus of the study was the relationships between people in the learning institutions. In general, trustees, principals and teachers report positive relationships between each of these three groups. There were some problems identified between the groups, and in particular principals from small schools and rural schools described problems with trustees. Trustees that identified problems would refer to leadership styles, community criticism and personality clashes. The 'diagnosis' of problems with school staff by trustees usually attributed the difficulties to insufficient contact or poor communication. Teachers also identified a lack of contact with trustees as a cause of problems.

One of the results that changed from 1990 to 1991 was that in the earlier year teachers were critical of the principals need to give priority to school administration rather than professional leadership. The changes noted were used by Wylie to support the idea that collaborative decision-making is recommended to avoid conflict. Principals also thought that more release time for administration would resolve some problems. Another relationship considered was interschool relations, where over half of the principals reported no change.

Of the issues that parents raise with boards, discipline and uniform, and funding and fundraising are mentioned the most, whereas the boards said

the matters they would most often consult the community on were in the areas of policy development and general survey/parent satisfaction. And when issues or problems do arise most boards appear to be able to fully or partially find solutions. Very few trustees reported failure on such matters. The growing independence of the boards is reflected by their desire for more training or advice but they do not feel that they have a need for outside help to solve problems.

The major findings were that the pace of change and uncertainty of school funding made people sceptical about the outcomes of *Tomorrow's Schools*. Principals' workloads were heavy and it was not until the 1991 survey that principals reported a reduction in the number of hours they were working. By 1991 principals were reporting that they were receiving less training and yet they said they would like more. Most parents and trustees felt they had enough information about the changes from schools, most parents felt they had sufficient contact with their principal, child's teachers and school trustees. This compares to half of the teachers and trustees who felt that they did not have enough contact with parents. Schools in low income areas were working hard to meet the difference in fees that they did not feel they could ask parents for. Many of the teachers reported fewer resources to work with in the 1990 survey, and while it was thought that this may well be due to schools working with very conservative budgets in their first year, there was no change in the 1991 survey.

The new Ministry was often making requests to schools for information which the boards found frustrating given that they did not have their own systems set up as yet and nor did they have extra clerical help in collating such information. In general there was no evidence of dissatisfaction with the schools that trustee's children attended. For some they did not want the school itself to change. There were varying reports of the impact on job satisfaction by teachers with those working in smaller schools reporting smaller affects. There was a slow decline in satisfaction the longer trustees had been on the board. Parental satisfaction with their children's schooling remained high over the period of the surveys. Of significance in the second survey was the question of whether trustees would stand for re-election. One quarter would stand again and one quarter were unsure. Half of the boards had received resignations in the past year.

Respondents identified the areas of finance and property maintenance as the main areas of concern. With both teachers and principals commenting on the lack of time and training trustees have to complete tasks. On asking if they would like to make further changes to *Tomorrow's schools* three quarters of the principals and half of the trustees said they would like to slow the pace of change and increase financial and staffing resources. Only five per cent of trustees and no teachers or principals wanted to increase school autonomy. This supports the previous finding in the MTSP *Charter* report that primary and intermediate schools were happy with their level of responsibility as designated in the charter (Mansell, 1992).

Lastly, Wylie (1992a) found that in terms of principal satisfaction:

> administration is often seen as an extra, competitive with what principals, teachers, and indeed parents see as the real work of schools: 'hands on' work with children. (p41)

She felt that unless this notion of schooling is enlarged the shift to school-based management will always be in tension with this concern for children. Her suggestion is that this is only likely to be resolved if people with this view have a greater say in administration. What Mitchell et al. (1993) refers to as ownership. The trustees were found to be child focused, which is not unexpected, and this reinforced the focus of principals' as well.

> The purpose of schools, as vested in children, achievement of goals, and good working relations are prime sources of trustee satisfaction with their work. (p. 42)

Like the MTSP team Wylie (1992a) noted that there had been very little change in curriculum and teaching methods as a result of the reforms. Although there are changes to resourcing which is having an effect.

Wylie concludes her review by suggesting that:

> People in schools are also having to confront the pivotal question of what is best do be at the local level, and what at the national level - and how it is done. A pronounced theme amongst all four groups surveyed was a growing frustration that political rather than educational considerations were deciding where education was headed. For all the recent policy emphasis on self-managing schools, one has the impression...of growing powerlessness, or, conversely, a determination to resist that sense of powerlessness amongst those working in and for

> schools. Both their frustration and increasingly publicly expressed resistance to central policy moves can be seen to arise from either moves to increase the autonomy of schools which those at schools do not want, or because of problems which cannot be resolved by action at the individual school level. It is the resolution of these two areas, or the achievement of consensus, which will decide the long-term success of the change to school-base. (Wylie, 1992a, pp. 43-44)

The politicization of education, the feelings of powerlessness and determination will be given attention later in this study.

Governing Schools - Christchurch

Liz Gordon at the University of Canterbury had also been studying the 'work of boards of trustees' in a number of projects centred on schools in Christchurch and Canterbury. The first project conducted in 1992 examined the work of boards of trustees in ten Christchurch schools over a one month period' (Gordon, Boyask, & Pearce, 1994). Her initial findings indicated a trend between school rolls, funding and the work of boards of trustees. The results as she summarised them in 1994 were:

(i) There were fewer board candidates for the 1992 elections of trustees than in 1989. Co-option onto boards reflected a shift from representation to skills. This was more prominent in schools drawing on 'poorer areas'.

(ii) There were 'problems' in getting parent involvement especially in terms of board processes and policy-making.

(iii) The decrease in operational grants in real terms and the reduction in other forms of funding have placed schools in financial difficulties. The becomes pronounced in those schools with falling rolls and this appears to be closely linked to the socio-economic status of the school community.

(iv) The operational grant was found to be inadequate to cover maintenance and running costs in all schools studied.

(v) Boards generally have a 'lack of knowledge and understanding' of the problems of equity and this is evident in their policies and practices.

(vi) Boards were critical of the frequent policy changes, the amount of paperwork, the inability to answer questions and the 'lack of liaison' shown by the Ministry of Education. The boards were also critical of the School Trustees' Association's ability to represent them.

(vii) Schools have taken steps to market themselves using a range of strategies.

(viii) Inequalities are developing between schools over the time since changes were made. These seem to be linked to the socio-economic position of schools. Those in higher socio-economic areas tend to have available a wider range of choices and resources. These inequalities are increasing under the current policies.

(Gordon, Boyask, & Pearce, 1994, p. 3)

As a follow up to this research a survey was made of all schools in Christchurch which supported a link between socio-economic status and school rolls. This survey was combined with an in-depth study of four schools across a whole school year. The research question was:

> how do boards of trustees in schools work? More specifically, what are the differences between the work of boards of trustees in those schools which have an increasing roll, compared with those which are facing a drop in student numbers (Gordon, Boyask, & Pearce, 1994, p. 1)).

For this research one primary and one secondary was selected because they had falling rolls and the other two were selected because of their increasing rolls. The schools with falling rolls were also in areas of higher unemployment and families living on government benefits plus those who are engaged in work were engaged in jobs judged as semi- or unskilled-skilled. The schools with increasing rolls were selected from economically wealthier communities. Both schools chosen using this criteria implemented enrolment schemes in 1993.

The main method of data gathering was by attending board meetings and taped interviews with principals and board members. The bulk of this work was conducted in 1993 with some work carried over into 1994. Each school was treated as a case study with only the final analysis involving any comparison.

The following then is a summary of the results of the above study which summarises the findings in relations to each of Gordon et al.'s research questions.

Effective governance

While there were marked differences in how the schools developed their 'images' of governance there was agreement that governance is:

> something that takes place within the schools, or in the relationship between school and the community.... those things that impinge on the schools from outside these relationships are, more than likely, seen to impede rather than enhance effective governance (Gordon, Boyask, & Pearce, 1994, p. 20).

Those factors identified as distinguishing the differing approaches used by boards were; both internal - the principal and size of school; and external - funding, school rolls and relationship with community. Thus there is no one effective form of governance but rather it is a matter of finding the best form to respond to the particular challenges each school faces. The three factors identified as having potential to improve or impede effective governance; the principal, the community relations and the professional skills of the trustees. The definition of effective governance developed as a result of this study is:

> knowing the school, knowing the community, meeting external requirements in a way that reflects the perceived needs of a specific school and doing all this in a time frame that recognises the volunteer role of trustees. Effective governance is not easy. None of the schools are in an ideal situation - but all do an excellent job in the circumstances (Gordon, Boyask, & Pearce, 1994, p. 29).

How boards work

Variation between boards were noticed in terms of how formal the monthly boards meetings were, however, the majority of parents on all the boards had had previous committee experience. The report described how that maybe only one school could be said to representative of the community and in that case it was thought that this was because the community itself was homogeneous. The board members themselves recognised that there was difficulty in reflecting the diverse groups from

within communities. The trustee meetings were also seen to be a Western European tradition which was alien to people from other cultures.

Gender imbalances were also recognised as problematic for some boards as was the contribution of people who had professional backgrounds to draw on as opposed to those who did not. The two secondary schools recognised the value of having student representatives on the board. The student and staff representatives were in interesting positions because they had definite groups to which they had to represent and report back to unlike most parents who do not have regular contact with parent representatives on the board.

The adequacy of funding was seen to be a determinant of how a board worked. Those boards that had difficulty in raising money from the community and from parents had to spend time considering how to overcome these 'external barriers' to running a school. Funding would impact on spending and allocation which would create debate in meetings. Even those schools that felt they were doing 'okay' found that putting money aside for maintenance was not always easy. In some ways the boards recognised that the schools were there to meet differing needs dependant on whether the children came to school ready to learn or whether the students were coming from deprived backgrounds.

Making policy decisions

From previous work by Gordon (1993) it was found that boards had difficulty in getting non-trustee parents involved in the development of school policies with the exceptions of school uniform and enrolment policy. In order to study this further Gordon et al. (1994) attempted to ascertain what items got onto board agendum and which did not, how policies were set and monitored, how enrolment policies develop, and finally to ascertain whether there was a clear distinction between governance and management.

What gets on the agenda?

Board discussion is generally determined and bound up with the reports made by key board personnel with designated positions or subcommittee reports. There were times when parents would place items for discussion on the agenda. The principal's report would usually include material

about the roll, staffing and staff development and school events. Staff representatives were rarely seen to add material to the agenda for discussion. Those schools with attached units would sometimes find people from the units attending meetings to represent themselves.

One of the primary schools used informal consultation and decision making between meetings so that many staffing issues are resolved by the staff representative and the principal and likewise the weekly meetings between the principal and chairperson 'filtered' out many issues without them being presented to the board meetings. While one trustee indicated that this form of decision-making represented 'brainwashing' on the part of the principal, the report writers thought the format reflected the principal's clear view of his role in the school and the rest of the board's confidence in his abilities. This, plus the conflict free nature of the decision making and the shared goals of the board and principal, is used to support a positive view of the process.

For the secondary schools many of the issues faced were a result of communications with external agencies such as the ERO, the Ministry of Education and the STA. Staff would also present issues to the board that generally had to be dealt with quickly, and after sub committee reports et cetera. there was little time for non urgent or new issues. There were views that it was the principals' role to say what should be dealt with by bringing matters to the board's attention. This position could sometimes be counterbalanced by the staff representative who may offer alternative perspectives about what is happening inside a school. The extra amount of work generated by outside agencies in secondary schools was a constraint on what else could be covered and this meant that parent trustees had less opportunity to bring forward other issues compared to parent trustees in primary schools.

How are policies set and monitored

While the majority of work in developing policies was thought to be over by the time the second boards were elected in 1992 follow up by the ERO had shown that many boards were weak in implementing and monitoring certain policies. Each of the schools in Gordon et al. (1994) had different approaches to policy.

One of the primary schools would have the board develop policy unless it was seen as a curriculum area or a matter of learning and teaching in which case the policy was developed at staff meetings. If the policy related to one particular sub-committee they would usually draw up the first draft. The first drafts are then presented to the board for discussion and approval. The policy is then displayed for people in the community to make comments upon before being passed by the board as formally adopted. Because of the time spent at school by trustees much of the monitoring would occur informally given the opportunities trustees had to talk with staff and view policy in action.

The other primary school decided that instead of spending large amounts of time writing policy for situations that might not arise they made an explicit decision to only write policy as required. Rather than using policy to provide direction its value is seen as documenting current practice which can be useful for new board members to see how things operate. The principal's view was that it would consume too much time of trustees who are "lay people who meet once a month" (Gordon, Boyask, & Pearce, 1994, p. 55). The staff had found the policy useful in supporting decisions they would make that parents might query such as the supervision of students after school hours. The preference for practice over policy was supported also by the chairperson and relied on the assumption of continuity in board membership and 'a set of shared understanding in their heads'.

One of the secondary schools had a policy sub-committee whose major role in the first board term was to develop policy and oversee the process. During the current term temporary sub-committees were set up to develop policy as required and presented through the principal's report to the board. There is an expectation that all staff contribute to at least one sub-committee and to facilitate this school ends one hour early on Friday afternoons to enable staff to attend to these monthly meetings. This school had a policy making policy which was referred to when there was uncertainty on how to proceed. Monitoring implementation is difficult given trustees absence at school so the chairperson has taken on the role of doing this in her weekly meetings with the principal. The temporary sub-committees make monthly reports to the board while they were active.

The second secondary school relied on many of the processes set up by the board of governors prior to 1989 as did the secondary school referred to above. Existing groups would take responsibility for policy development if it seemed to fall within their area of activity. If the policy was deemed to be of interest to the whole school community then a separate sub-committee would be established such as was the case when the school uniform was to be reviewed. Another issue that would be of interest to the whole school community and beyond, was that of the amalgamation of the secondary school with the local intermediate. This was seen as innovative yet possibly stressful, and was the cause of ongoing discussion at board meetings. This was one issue that was not given to a sub-committee to consider.

Enrolment policy

For two of the schools, one primary and one secondary, any form of enrolment policy was in the form of how to attract more students given falling rolls. For the primary school in particular the transient nature of the local community and low numbers of school-aged children in the area meant that planning was difficult. Open nights and school publications were seen as increasingly important to the marketing of schools. Schools with falling rolls and decreasing funds found it difficult to match the amount of money put into marketing by "richer" schools.

There were also difficulties in maintaining relationships with other contributing schools at different levels when schools were 'competing' for students. One example was a primary school asking a secondary school to provide manual training for its form I and II pupils when the job had previously been done by an intermediate school which contributed many students to the secondary school. The offer while declined was also to be resolved by calling a cluster meeting of schools in the area to 'discuss and collectively decide' on how to resolve this issue. This was despite the school suffering from a falling roll which could be alleviated in part by taking on such students.

One primary and one secondary had implemented enrolment schemes to set a maximum limit on the roll during 1993. For the primary school an increasing roll was seen as a result of real estate development, demand from parents of out-of-zone children because of a reputation of high

educational achievements and curriculum subjects offered, and little space on site for further development of the school. The enrolment scheme used the criteria of proximity and accessibility to the school, brothers and sisters present or have been present at the school, and particular family or social needs that could be met by the school. While this scheme is used to set parameters for avoiding overcrowding there is an enrolment policy to restrict class sizes, each level having it s own restrictions - New Entrants 25, Juniors 29 and Standards two to four 31. This policy had meant that the board had avoided setting geographical boundaries to which it would accept people on one side of the street but not others.

The secondary school had set an upper limit of 1300 students to maintain services and conditions for students. The school used a geographical zone smaller than previous years when zoning was in place. People from outside the zone with siblings currently or previously enrolled, could attend. Any places left unfilled were then made available by ballot although some other criteria were also stipulated for access to the ballot. There were also planning problems at the other end of the school where it was not always possible to accurately determine how many students would return to school at senior levels. The school was actively involved in developing tertiary type courses.

Governance and management

The *Education Act, 1989*, acknowledges the difference between governance and management within schools:

> 75. **Boards to control management of schools** - except to the extent that any enactment or the general law of New Zealand provides otherwise, a school's Board has complete discretion to control the management of the schools as it thinks fit.
>
> 76. **Principals** - (1) A school's principal is the Board's chief executive in relation to the school's control and management .
>
> (2) Except to the extent that any enactment, or the general law of New Zealand provides otherwise, the principal -
>
> (a) Shall comply with the Board's general policy directions; and

> (b) Subject to paragraph (a) of this subsection, has complete discretion to manage as the principal thinks fit the school's day to day administration (pp. 46-47).

This would imply that the boards are to control school management by providing direction to its chief executive - the principal - who as long as he or she follows the general policy directions provided by the board may administer the school on a day to day basis in any way they like. Management - the ends - takes precedence over administration - the means. This has been complicated by the management feature of the legislation being called governance and the administration feature being referred to as management. This distinction was made in the *Lough Report* (Ministry of Education, 1990) where in endeavouring "to carry out a wide ranging review of the process and outcomes of the reform of education administration to date" (p. 2) they recommended:

> That through the School Trustees Association and the Principals' Associations there be a further clarification of the relative roles of the board of trustees and the principal within schools. This will emphasise the need for boards of trustees to be concerned with matters of governance and for principals to have delegated authority to manage. (Ministry of Education, 1990, p. 8)

This problem partly lay in schools not having "clearly defined objectives and an overall plan to achieve these objectives which integrates: an education plan; a personnel plan; a property management plan and a financial plan" (Ministry of Education, 1990, p. 17). This combined with a lack of role definitions for key personnel meant that responsibilities within the areas above were unspecified. This was compounded by key personnel being unclear about their relationships with other key personnel. The previous report, *Tomorrow's Schools*, had not used the terms governance and management but referred to the board having policy control and the principal having day to day control and the responsibility to implement policy (Lange, 1988).

As a result of the review team's recommendations a task force was set up to implement the team's recommendations. One of the outcomes of this was a set of five booklets, four that provide frameworks to cover the key areas identified above as meeting educational objectives, personnel, property and financial management and the fifth to outline the distinction

between governance and management. These documents could not be said to have a lot of content, as they were between only 20 and 30 pages long. The booklet on governance and management provided some guiding principles and then attempted to define the roles of the board of trustees, the principal, the chairperson, the staff representative, the student representative and the functions of sub-committees. There was also a note about meetings, conflicts of interest and general guidelines to preserving positive relationships.

In terms of distinguishing between governance and management the board who has the governance role is

> primarily responsible through the charter, for the establishment of goals for the school. This requires the Board to establish school policies after due consultation with the Principal, staff and school community, monitor and evaluate their results, and review the policies regularly (Principals' Implementation Task Force, 1990, p. 2).

They also had the task of supporting

> the Principal in his or her management role, by providing the delegated authorities in education, administration, personnel and finance matters to allow the Principal to manage effectively. These delegations should be recorded (Principals' Implementation Task Force, 1990, p. 3).

On the other hand the role of the principal is the management of the school which consists of providing: professional leadership in the educational, personnel, and administrative affairs of the school and reporting to the board on a regular basis, and educational leadership by establishing educational objectives for the school, in consultation with the board , staff, parents, students and the school community and communicating these objectives to all those groups.

There are several points that need to be made in regard to differentiating between governance and management. Firstly the task force that produced the booklets as a result of the recommendations of the *Lough Report* were all principals, indeed they were call the Principal's Implementation Task Force which seems strange given that they were writing guides for boards of trustees. This reflects another problem - in distinguishing between the role of the principal and the board it seems

that people have forgotten that principals are still members of the board. This confusion is compounded however, by the board being the principal's employer and all that entails. And so one might expect that in talking about the boards of trustees some references are without the principal while in other references, the principal is part of the group. This conceptual fuzziness may also result in social fuzziness at the level of board interactions.

In this study Gordon et al. found that the distinction between governance and management was unclear although it was not a feature of conflict at any of the four schools they studied. They found that in primary schools in particular parental involvement and parental presence in the classrooms was common unlike the secondary schools where parent representatives were seldom seen. At both of the primary schools studied trustees would spend a lot of time at school, often undertaking quite major tasks. This is seen to be the result of financial difficulties leading to volunteer help being used to avoid paying someone else to do the task. The guide to governance and management acknowledges that, in small schools especially, board members will often involve themselves in such activities but advise that the "boards should ensure that these sub-committees or members have clear definition of their tasks or roles...so that the dual roles of governance and management are kept distinct. It would be necessary to negotiate these roles" (Principals' Implementation Task Force, 1990, p. 3). Any negotiation of roles was not formalised and trustees saw their involvement as a matter of "'doing what needs to be done" (Gordon, Boyask, & Pearce, 1994, p. 67).

This parental involvement in providing assistance on a range of tasks became important when it was seen as likely to reduce costs. For one school they found it was possible to save on money previously paid to an accountant when the expertise was available within the board. This kind of pressure was leading the drive to elect trustees on the basis of the skills they possessed rather than because a trustee could be a spokesperson for a group within the community.

For one of the primary schools there was no clear distinction between governance and management. The board gave the principal authority to make decisions as he saw fit given that he was on site the whole time and

his power would be counterbalanced with ongoing and frequent negotiation between the principal and the chairperson and trustees, as to who would have what role as each issue arises. This is the school in a previous section recorded as not making a point of establishing policy on all matters as quickly as possible but rather creating policy when it was needed.

One of the areas where trustees have tended not to become involved is in the curriculum and professional areas which is usually seen as the domain of the professional - the teacher. This is despite the ERO expecting the trustees to be well versed in curriculum matters and to start showing leadership. This can seem threatening to the boards who place great importance in meeting in full, and to the letter, national requirements.

At the secondary schools the distinction between management and governance is easier to identify where parent trustees have less day to day involvement. Added to this is the previously mentioned feature of secondary schools spending too much time at board meetings responding to external requirements. Also secondary schools, being larger, can often call on a wider base of staff expertise to help out on management and administrative tasks. The principals at these schools believe their role involves keeping the board informed of management events. If the principal does not inform the board then the principal is making the decision and unless it creates a crisis then the board will never know about that aspect of management. In this setting then the governance/management distinction is negotiated between the principal and chairperson who meet regularly.

Gordon et al. (1994) noted that in interviewing trustees many would use the words management and governance interchangeably, even if they thought there was a clear distinction. Gordon et al. believe that the original distinction was formulated within the idea of partnership between school and community where each trustee brings something different to contribute to the board.

Funding

Gordon et al. enlisted the help of a financial analyst to assess the funding situation of the four schools. One of the primary schools had difficulty in

balancing its budget and actually budgeted for a $15, 000 deficit in the 1993 Financial year. The Ministry had agreed that it would be difficult to cut back spending on the various operational categories and advice given was to pool all money from asset rich attached units with the board rather than keeping it separate. By doing this and not withholding money for long term maintenance the school was able to carry money forward for both long term maintenance and as a surplus. While this was seen as positive it created a lot of tension for the board and the problem was seen as likely to be ongoing.

The other primary school was able to do better due to an increasing roll and the ability to generate funds equivalent to 27 per cent of its operational grant from the government. This compares with 6 per cent for the other primary school. This school had its own problems, however, and they were in the area of building maintenance and renovation.

Both secondary schools were administering million dollar operational budgets and accruing reserves in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. The school with the falling roll was more cautious in its spending as roll fluctuations could cause income to vary by as much as $100 000 over a year. Like the primary schools there were variations in the amount of money raised in the community. One school would take in $797 per student and the other $863. Equity grants from the government also provide a significant amount of money for schools in poorer areas if they have a large roll.

This study has identified the importance of community funding to the ongoing upkeep of schools but has also recognises that even schools that are supposedly "well off" can finish the year in a deficit and that schools in poorer areas carry forward a surplus.

Equity

The three clauses relating to equity in the *National Education Guidelines* (O'Rourke, 1993) refer to equal educational opportunity, the success for Maori students and the respect for ethnic diversity. The *Education Act* 1989 identifies that the social constitution of the boards is an equity issue given that the board is to reflect the community they represent. If the

community is considered homogeneous, as Gordon et al. felt one of the school's community was, then providing equitable representation should not be a problem. For the other three schools this was not so easy. For one of the schools with a very diverse community direct representation would be impossible with a limited board size. To construct an equitable representation format would require a lot of time and resources that the school did not feel that it had. One of the secondary schools had a large board in its attempt to find room to allow representation from various groups within the community. Despite this people recognised that those from the lower socio-economic parts of the community are unlikely to want to contribute to the board or were not given the opportunity because of the election process.

At the level of curriculum primary schools would tend to identify individuals that had specific needs to be met as opposed to the secondary schools who would identify groups of students for whom they would then run programmes. Also as mentioned before because this involved curriculum areas trustees did not tend to contribute as much to the ongoing development once policy had been set up.

In summary Gordon et al. (Gordon, Boyask, & Pearce, 1994) found that secondary schools dealt with a wider range of equity issues but that each school took a focus that reflected the concerns of the community.

Meeting External Requirements

While the intention of the Picot Report (Taskforce to Review Educational Administration, 1988) and Tomorrow's Schools (Lange, 1988) was the devolution of control the outcome would seem to indicate that this had not been achieved within the new structures (Gordon, Boyask, & Pearce, 1994). There were variations in how schools responded to outside agencies. For one school that had requested extra funding from the Ministry it was found that this created a power imbalance where the school did everything possible to meet all external demands in order to appear as though they were doing a good job of governing the school, just in case they should need to call upon the Ministry for support. This did not produce extra funding but they were given guidance on how to overcome the problem in the short term. This same school when it found

that it had not set enough statements of performance for the coming year finally agreed upon double the number required.

The other primary school seemed to reflect the other extreme in regard to meeting external requirements. The board's approach was that anything done is done in the best interests of the school and they continuously move in this direction regardless of external constraints. The only requirements fulfilled are those pre-requisite to the continued running of the school. Gordon et al. (1994) describe this school's relationship with the Ministry as minimal rather than "bad".

The secondary school trustees feel that devolution has in effect meant the boards are doing the work of the Ministry as a result of the large amount of correspondence received. This results in a certain cynicism that the Ministry was even reflecting a political bias when documents sent out were interpreted as a form of electioneering funded by the taxpayer. This is what created the furore when the Ministry of Education surveyed schools in the Selwyn electorate earlier in the year when there was a by-election (New Zealand Press Association, 1994e, p. 1). There is a feeling of non responsiveness from the Ministry, reflecting control by exclusion (Chitty, 1989) whereby the Ministry only makes its presence felt if things are not happening. Many schools feel that the Ministry has its own agenda beyond meeting the needs of schools.

> The dislike of the Ministry does not stem from any deep desire for more autonomy, but from a perception that Ministry intervention does not assist boards with their difficult tasks, but hinders them. Given the Ministry's key role in funding schools, and the increasing financial pressure all the schools are under, perhaps this view is not surprising (Gordon, Boyask, & Pearce, 1994, p. 89).

Other agencies were supporting the schools and it was felt that any difficulties caused were a result of these agencies such as the ERO and the SES suffering from underfunding by the Minister of Education.

Being accountable

Accountability was studied in terms of external and internal forms. The primary school, in attempting to resolve funding problems, gave the impression of being 'anxious to please', believing that this was the best way to ensure the school's future viability. For the other primary school

non-compliance was not an issue, and there were areas where they were not complying and did not believe they needed to as they felt they were doing a good job.

The secondary schools were also aware of the demands being made upon them. One school with financial difficulties was reluctant to criticise the Ministry at the same time as it was needing the Ministry's support. Both schools were concerned at the demand of the Ministry for trustees to take more responsibility for the curriculum area, which trustees saw as a management task as opposed to an area of governance.

Gordon et al. (1994) noted that it would appear that "poorer" schools would appear to be more dependent on the Ministry whereas the "better-off" schools could maintain greater autonomy from the Ministry. Thus there were some equity issues involved in the way finance was constraining and facilitating board autonomy in relation to the Ministry.

Internal accountability at the primary schools was maintained by the presence of the trustees at school on a regular and frequent basis. One school had taken this further with members deliberately attending events to maintain a presence for communication with parents. Trustees were also allocated families and caregivers to maintain contact. Boards were always endeavouring to find ways to increase community input to school decision making. The primary school that did not have a lot of written policy therefore did not require a lot of monitoring. Issues to be dealt with or still to be resolved would come back to the board informally.

Conclusion

In conclusion the report noted that the principals had very different leadership styles. Some would lead from behind while others would lead from the front. Either way, the principal was a central factor in determining the success of schools at getting through the day. This has placed extra stress on principals and there is an acknowledged concern about the amount of burnout suffered by principals. There is a strong case for administrative assistance given the extra work that has shifted to principals.

Gordon et al. identified significant issues as a result of the research into these four schools.

The first is the issue of representation. There was a continuing demand for particular skills from the board as a group. This was significant for the schools in poorer areas where those skills may not have been as readily available. This led to a change in priority for selection on boards from one of representation to one of skills needed for running a board. For those schools where skills are more difficult to find in representatives there is the added difficulty of not being able to afford the training required to gain those skills. When this type of effect is combined with an image of failing as a school then the external monitoring and constant scrutiny can demoralise the self confidence of a board.

The second issue is identifying standards of "good" governance. Each school seems to achieve outcomes in its own way yet externally they may fail to meet the ERO's standards of good governance which is based on complying with national legislation and regulation. This type of standard misses one of the main themes of the Picot Report - that decentralised administration will find the best way to respond to community and educational needs that centralised forms of administration cannot do (Taskforce to Review Educational Administration, 1988). In many ways one of the most successful schools in terms of roll numbers and board cohesiveness was the one that would have the lowest rating in terms of meeting national criteria for successful governance. This brings into question the ability of ERO to carry out effectiveness reviews or develop measures of 'added value' in schools. Those schools which have a highly transient and large immigrant population are unlikely to fare well. As long as boards are evaluated on outcomes they may be misrepresented because the processes are not measured.

It was noted with concern that it was possible for schools to not meet equity requirements and, further many of the trustees were unaware or unsure of how to go about meeting equity requirements. Added to this was the financial difficulty that some solutions would impose on schools. Yet the Ministry did not "appear" forthcoming in terms of training or money to support these outcomes.

Another issue was the way schools are funded. The significance of rolls in determining funding on a yearly basis makes it difficult to plan with any degree of certainty. The uncertainty of roll numbers can then impact on other outcomes such as developing courses. Those schools with full rolls can use that certainty to plan with confidence. All schools felt that financial issues were causing problems: it was not having less money at the end of the year that would seem to make the difference; rather, that an amalgamation of factors contribute to the "erosion" of confidence in a board's work.

Summary

Each of the studies reviewed in this chapter provide a wide range of findings. Yet common themes were emerging as prominent issues for the trustees, in the running of their schools. Wylie's and Mitchell et al.'s studies conducted closer to the 1989 change-over recorded the ambivalence presented by the trustees in regard to the reforms -their enthusiasm to get involved despite the difficulties experienced. Gordon et al.'s study which is more recent, and therefore is more likely to identify themes that will continue beyond the reforms, finds that the theme of governance - management is critical to achieving "good" governance. A theme which was also present in the reports of Wylie and Mitchell et al.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Considerations

This chapter will review some of the theoretical literature surrounding policy development and implementation, as well as some of the underlying philosophical issues inherent in policy research. The last part of the chapter will outline some of the key concepts that will be used in the analysis of the data.

Theoretical Review

Janet Finch (1986) has reflected on the changes in approaches to social policy and social research in respect to education. She outlines the dominance of quantitative survey methods prior to World War II. Two decades after the War the dominance was still prominent and was maintained by the influx of sociologists into educational research. Interestingly sociologists were not given positions by that name in the same way economists and statisticians are designated in the British Civil Service. Instead they are found in the positions of social survey officers and research officers (Payne, Dingwall, Payne, & Carter, 1981). A key term used to describe the research at the time in Britain was 'political arithmetic':

> Essentially it means 'calculating the chances of reaching different stages in the educational process for children of different class origins' (Finch, 1986, p. 30).

From the 1970s on there has been a changing orientation toward social research increasing the range of approaches drawn upon. In the main these new types of studies have been based on ethnographic and naturalistic methods. Finch hypothesises that because many of the qualitative sociologists conducting research in education were concerned primarily with developing the validity of these new approaches in terms of theory that less attention was paid to policy studies but this is now beginning to change.

At the same time another perspective had developed in the form of 'new sociology', however, its critical approach to studying educational policy and research, and relativistic nature did not lend itself to fact gathering that the policy makers like to draw on in their own work (Finch, 1986;

Payne et al., 1981). Ozga supports Finch's distinction between the traditionalists and the new sociologists within educational policy studies drawing on Hargreaves (1983) terms of pluralism and Marxism to describe them. She suggests that the new sociology's rise in popularity is because the:

> economic crisis and resultant growth of conflict in most western education systems have encouraged sociologists of education to examine a range of education policy issues from 'welfare' policies to race, gender and vocationalism, very often as part of their concern to explore the relations between education, the state and capitalism (Ozga, 1987, p. 139).

She develops Hargreaves distinction between the micro-level interactionists - those using ethnographic and naturalistic methods - and the macro-level theoreticians for the state - those of the new sociology. The distinction has resulted in different research agenda and a discussion of educational policy in which the parties "talks past each other". The Marxists accuse the pluralists of being atheoretical and they in turn accuse the Marxists of being too general in their work, producing untestable concepts and therefore being of no use to policy makers. An example of this would be the difficulty in using the concept of the *relative autonomy of the economic* in relation to the other levels of society such as the political and ideological.

Having read some of the work of Ozga, Hargreaves and Finch it is not easy to see where the ethnographers fit into the dichotomy of pluralists and Marxists. Ethnographers use interpretivistic and empirical approaches in their work, thus not falling into the Marxist group but at the same time they are non-quantitative and non-prescriptive, thus failing to be associated with the pluralists as described by Ozga. If anything the qualitative approaches have been used by both groups to support their approaches to policy, the critical sociologists taking up forms of ethnography called ethnomethodology, hermeneutics and discourse analysis and the pluralists preferring the phenomenological and social interactionists forms of ethnography (Craib, 1984). This is made possible by remembering that qualitative research has two levels of meaning. The first refers to forms of data gathering and the second refers to data analysis. So while many pluralists and Marxists have started to consider

what qualitative methods has to offer it is the types of analysis and its integration into theorising that distinguish the two groups.

The methods of data gathering include in-depth interviewing, semi-structured and unstructured interviewing, and participant and non-participant observation. What will distinguish researchers in terms of the pluralist - Marxist dichotomy is what the do with the data once it is gathered. Some will use the data to construct a personal 'self-account' of the subject's position in their social world while others will attempt to link this account to wider social structures. The direction taken will often indicate what the data 'means' and influence subsequent theorising and data gathering (Harvey, 1990). Ozga seems to have forgotten this and does not see the possibility for ethnographers to be working on both sides of the micro-macro dichotomy. In order for the ethnographer to get to macro side of the dichotomy they must start on the micro side. People have recognised this as an opportunity to integrate the macro-micro approaches in the form of micro-studies (Hargreaves, 1983; Maguire & Ball, 1994; Ozga, 1987). Maybe it even has the potential to make the dichotomy disappear.

Further reasons given for the two parties not coming together are listed as pragmatic - that is the Pluralists' concern with action and the search for solutions is in contrast with the Marxists' concern for analysis and finding out how things are. Ozga believes that this accounts for the increasing influence of management within the field of educational administration. Another reason then for the distinction is the prescriptive and controlling motifs of the pluralists as opposed to the descriptive and critical motifs of the Marxists (Ozga, 1987). These approaches reflect the political aspirations of researchers involved and the role they see for themselves. This is recognised by Hargreaves (1983) when he says it would not be possible to have the Marxists produce the theory and the pluralists test it. Yet he recognises that both groups are attempting to come to an understanding of policy but that each offers one half of a solution to a two-sided problem. They are complementary rather than competing accounts and his concern is to bring them together. One account shows how educational change is influenced by factors within the capitalist mode of production and the other account shows how these factors

manifest themselves as processes of educational policy making and outcomes

Those wishing to see the two accounts come together have adopted the term 'policy sociology'. This is a term used by Payne et al. (1981) to develop the relationship between sociology and policy research which in Britain has almost been non-existent. This is despite the thorough examination of the moral and political nature of sociology in the past (Berger, 1977). The purpose of policy sociology is to allow for a common language to develop between policy makers and sociologists so that policy makers can start to make use of the academic literature produced by sociologists and sociologists can begin to understand the needs of policy makers. Once this starts to happen then sociologists can have a channel to influence policy based on sociological knowledge (Payne et al., 1981).

Policy sociology is adopted as a term by Ozga (1987) and Maguire and Ball (1994) not so much with the intention of gaining more influence for sociology in the area of policy making but to describe the term of bringing together the macro theory of the sociologists and the micro methodologies of the qualitative researchers using ethnography. However, Hargreaves' idea of linked micro-studies suffers from some philosophical problems as much as any political ones. He recognises that there are theoretical differences, describing them as providing one half to a two-sided problem but, according to Shilling (1992), Hargreaves attempts to elude some of the theoretical quandaries that social theorists have struggled with by restricting his macro-level study to middle range theories

Issues of macro and the micro-theorising

In the context of this study the question to ask that might reveal how the macro and micro may come together is; to what extent does policy developed at the macro level of analysis influence implementation at the micro level of analysis. At the macro level of educational policy development and reform there are a range of concerns within the literature about the political nature of policy that was once portrayed as scientific and how it is now seen as part of the state apparatus supporting the capitalist mode of production. These concerns were usually supported by possible happenings at the micro-level but supporting

evidence is usually anecdotal, however, this is starting to change with more large scale quantitative studies being used to support theoretical development (Lauder, et al., 1994; Nash et al., 1992).

The problem arising as an issue within macro-micro sociology is the same central question that social philosophy confronts, that is the problem of agency versus structure or free will versus determinism. Sociological analyses tends to focus on one or the other each with their own seemingly irresolvable problems. A small group of people struggle over how to bring them together usually with little success.

> At issue is the analytic value in regarding macro-scale institutions as systems impinging on the actions of individuals, and whether patterns manifest at the aggregate level should be seen as expressing the system's dynamic or as reflecting the interactions of individuals and groups. The conventional distinction between macro- and micro-sociology has been transected by the shift away from a concern with the functional imperatives and needs of social systems towards a presumption of the importance of conflict and power in the shaping of macro-level institutions and of the knowledgeability and autonomy of social actors in the construction of social reality. That shift is implicit in interactionist and ethnomethodological research and explicitly in the onslaught of Marxian and critical theory on structural-functionalism. (Fielding, 1988, p. 1)

Critical to the reassessment of structure and agency and therefore the macro-micro dichotomy has been the renewed conceptualisation of power as an intervening factor in both macro and micro studies. It is the post-structuralists who have returned to concerns about individuals and the way they construct at the same time as being constructed. The use of the concept of power in the development of these ideas has been prominent in the post modernist reflections of the constrained agency of people. Studies have reflected on the importance of language in the construction of meaning for groups of people and how the power relations based on discourse (language) and meanings within such groups maintain or resist the current social practices (Craib, 1984, Fairclough, 1989).

In bringing together the work of a number of prominent social theoreticians Lukes (1986) has attempted to assess the concept of power in terms of the micro-macro dichotomy. Writers such as Russell, Weber,

Habermas, Parsons, Simmel and Foucault tend to either talk about power as the ability to act in order to achieve intended outcomes even though constrained, or to portray power (usually referred to as power relations) as the structuring or determining of human activity so that people are objects rather than subjects. Despite his attempts to do otherwise Lukes cannot avoid supporting one side of the dichotomy. I believe this outcome arises because he sees power as something people have - the exercise of power - as opposed to the power relations that exist between people - structural determinism. This is supported by Clegg in his assessment of Lukes' earlier work on power when he states that (1989) "Agency and structure are not dialectically synthesised. Agency remains predominant and structure has been marginalised" (p. 103).

This further increases the difference between the macro and micro and I have come to represent it in the graphic shown in Figure 1. For policy sociologists an important problem to consider is whether ethnography can dissolve the boundary or at least bring the two sides of the coin together. This point will be considered in the next section.

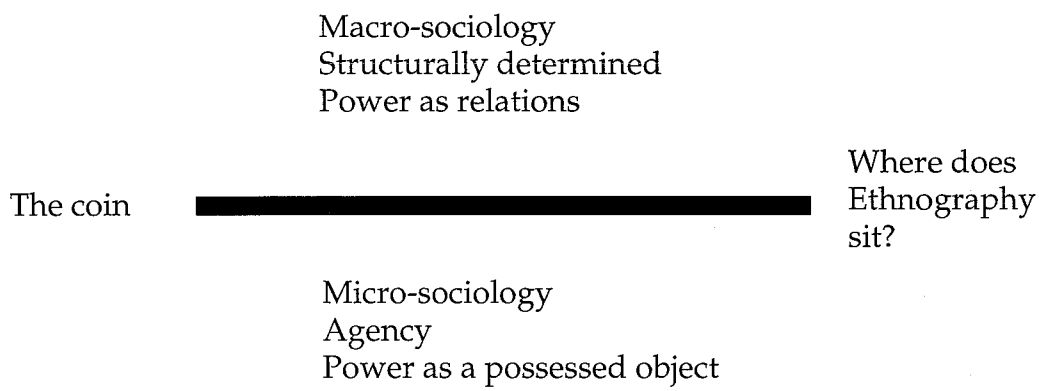

Figure 1 A diagram presenting the dichotomy associated with macro and micro-sociology

One of the important issues for policy developers is deciding how to bring about change in a system. Stated this way I am already indicating that change involves some sort of agency which policy developers possess. However, maybe such people are duped by a misrepresentation of reality

yet there is nothing to prevent them from believing they do have agency. So assuming that the policy developers do have agency what change would be possible or at least desirable and at what level should it be introduced to the system? At the micro or the macro level or even possibly at both levels. If both, how are the micro and macro levels of policy implementation to be coordinated? Giddens has a theory that may provide an answer to some of these questions.

Giddens has developed the concept of structuration in an attempt to understand and to overcome the structure - agency dichotomy.

> [enquiring] *into the process of reproduction is to specify the connections between 'structuration' and 'structure'.* [Italics in original] The characteristic error of the philosophy of action is to treat the problem of 'production' only, thus not developing any concept of structural analysis at all; the limitation of both structuralism and functionalism, on the other hand, is to regard reproduction as a mechanical outcome, rather than as an active constituting process, accomplished by, and consisting in, the doings of active subjects (Giddens, 1976, p. 120).

Structuration involves considering the simultaneous occurrence of the processes of social production and reproduction. Giddens distinguishes between collectivities consisting of interactions between members of a collective and the "structure[8]" that such groups have which he describes as systems of generative rules and resources. It is these rules and resources that allow the process of production and reproduction to occur. The overall process is described by the term 'constituting'.

> By the duality of structure I mean that social structures are both constituted by human agency [produced], and yet at the same time are the very medium of this constitution [reproduced] (Giddens, 1976, p. 121).

This constitution is more than acting within constraints as though free will and determinism can be separated out but rather the duality, that Giddens refers to above, is the integration of the two, such that any action is at the

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[8]Shilling (1992) notes that Gidden's use of the term "social system" is closer in meaning to other theorists, such as Marxists and functionalists, use of the term structure. By differentiating between structure and social system Giddens hopes to show how people's actions actively construct social systems via the reproduction of structures.

same time structuring. They are inseparable elements of what Giddens calls modalities, the mediation of interaction and structure in the processes of social reproduction. This idea then attempts to remove any primacy that might be given to structure or agency by describing a chicken and egg situation without giving the history of which came first.

Interaction is made up of three elements - communication, the operation of power, and moral relations. The mediation of interaction and structures always involves these three elements. Structural rules form the basis of communication and interaction. Structural resources are described as those things that give people power to make things happen. It is these resources that give people "capabilities" to make things happen and each time people act they are reproducing rules and resources in the singular production of that act. The combination of certain rules and resources over time in particular places form "structural principles" and these combinations may also adhere to particular "social positions". So people in particular social positions will draw on certain rules and resources associated with the position but at the same time there are structural principles that guide the interaction of people who may or may not come from different social positions.

The challenge for Giddens then is accounting for change. Within being constituted and constituting how is change described without giving back a primacy to one part of the duality?

> Every act which contributes to the reproduction of a structure is also an act of production, a novel enterprise, and as such may initiate change by altering that structure at the same time as it reproduces it - as the meanings of words change in and through their use (Giddens, 1976, p. 128).

Giddens likes to use current understandings of language in terms of la langue and la parole as a model for social action. The use of language in interaction reproduces the structures of language - la langue - at the same time as it produces novel and meaningful communication within social practise - la parole (Harris, 1981). The two are tied together because in order to be understood or to deceive people must reproduce the structures of language yet at the same time produce new and meaningful dialogue to mediate social interaction and change. This constitutes the hermeneutic circle. A further similarity between Gidden's Theory and this particular

form of linguistics is that people use language without necessarily knowing the linguistic rules by which they manage to use language to communicate. Giddens uses the term practical consciousness to refer to peoples' ability to use language and other forms of interaction without knowing how it works - the taken-for-granted - and he uses the term discursive consciousness to describe what people can articulate about social conditions and interaction. It is this last feature that allows people to be self-reflexive, which is the central feature of the hermeneutic circle (Giddens, 1976). This identifies the starting point for change - the ability to recognise the meaning of one's behaviour and monitor it in social interaction and if so desired change that behaviour. The importance of this for ethnographers is that they are involved in a double hermeneutic. They wish to give new meaning to that which is already meaningful for the subject.

Archer like Stevens attempts to maintain an analytical dualism rather than the duality created by Giddens. Archer is described as a systems theorist who uses the term morphogenesis to describe the interaction between action and structure which produces structural elaboration (Fielding, 1988).

> The morphogenetic perspective is not only dualistic but sequential, dealing in endless cycles of structural conditioning/social interaction/structural elaboration - thus unravelling the dialectic interplay between structure and action. 'Structuration", by contrast, treats the ligature binding structure, practice and system as indissoluble, hence the necessity of duality and the need to gain a more indirect analytical purchase on the elements involved (Archer in (Fielding, 1988, p. 4).

The advantages that Archer claims makes dualism better than Giddens' duality are the very things that Giddens wants to avoid: theorising about variations in voluntarism and determinism; the temporal and distinctive analysis of action and structure; and the maintenance of a subject and object in social theory. The question then is does Archer's analytic dualism overcome any of the problems associated with maintaining a distinction between the macro and micro? Her claim would be that one needs to assess how the two come together and interact to realise various outcomes, that is there is limited agency available within structural constraints. The sequential nature of morphogenesis would seem to

support the idea that history is the correct way to study sociology and consequently policy. The challenge for Giddens is to provide an alternative way of thinking about social reproduction, no small task given that the duality described by Archer is the mainstay of western philosophical traditions. For Giddens this transcendence starts by accounting for the constitution of action above the level of interaction itself. The designation of structure as generative rules and resources would almost seem Neo-Weberian and poses some problems in the role they take in analysing change (Held & Thompson, 1989). Many theorists have given attention to language as an archetypal structure - generative rules and resources - because of the way in which they mediate social interaction (Fairclough, 1989).

All this theorising postulates some sort of empirical work to test out its validity and heuristic value. In the current study this will involve the use of ethnographic research into educational policy development and implementation. In describing a problem one has already assigned a solution according to the background assumptions in the description. Can I create descriptions that account for the macro and micro at the same time? Or would it be better for the knowing sociologist to choose a description to fit the solution they 'know or believe' will work. Can sociologists use the macro and micro accounts without assigning power to some people and taking it away from others? Sociologists involved in knowledge construction are making moral decisions based on the meaning systems they use in their theory construction. Thus sociologists have the potential to be both radical and conservative in their offerings as policy sociologists. Ball's editorial note in Power (1992) emphasises the development now required of policy sociology:

> The achievement of high quality policy analysis rests in an important part upon establishing cogent and coherent theoretical foundations. Policy analysis has tended in the past to be theoretically modest, if not downright conservative and short-sighted. That is beginning to change but there still seems to be too much of an exclusive emphasis on substantive issues and a systematic ignoring of theory matters. (p. 493)

The *Monitoring Today's Schools* reports, the *Impact of Tomorrow's Schools* Survey and the *Governing Schools* report reviewed in the previous chapter

reflect an emphasis on the substantive in the relative absence of much theoretical development. This is what Ozga (1987)was being critical of in her summary of much of the empirical literature referred to earlier.

Policy Sociology

For Ozga (1987) the failure of pluralist theorising in educational policy to cope with change and conflict has created opportunities

> for the development of policy sociology, rooted in the social science tradition, historically informed and drawing on qualitative and illuminative techniques (p. 144).

The possibility of qualitative approaches providing material about the actual people involved in educational policy increases the complexity of many of the educational agencies that macro theoreticians treat as separate and unified entities. Such work can start to challenge an over determined view of people at the same time as enlarging our understanding of the nature of the state and its role in capitalism. Ozga advocates the development of what she terms 'middle term theories' which draw on macro conceptions and which can be tested by data gathering by policy makers.

Maguire and Ball (1994) follow up on this idea with an analysis of the types of work that might constitute policy sociology, grouping the material into three 'orientations':

> first, a re-emerging interest in "elite" studies or what might be called situated studies of policy formation; second, the development of "trajectory studies"; and third implementation studies. It is important to underscore the diversity among these studies and to note the healthy theoretical differences and debate among the various contributors (p. 279).

The *elite studies* are based on gaining an understanding of how policy makers view themselves and their activities usually through the use of interview methods. This material is then linked back to an analysis of the detailed workings of the state apparatus. The term elite been derived from the use of the material to renew interest in the activity of policy making as a class based activity.

The *trajectory studies* are described as similar to elite studies in that trajectory studies start by focusing on policies as they have arisen within the policy elite.

> The trajectory studies "follow" and analyse particular policies beginning from "a detailed case study of the micropolitics of the initiative, including an analysis of the interplay between the key actors involved in introducing, adapting and interpreting the policy," extending to "the actual initial implementation of the policy". (Maguire & Ball, 1994, p. 279)

For Maguire and Ball the strength of this type study is their ability to move beyond giving the impression that policy is something done to schools and teachers and instead revealing "how policy is a complex process involving conflicts and mediations from various origins and points of initiation to points of implementation" (p. 280). This is supported by Riseborough (1993) who states that the

> Lived experience of policy is not something that merely *happens to* teachers and learners but rather a *happening* [emphasis in original] accomplished by them, albeit in relationship to powerful others. Policy intention accretes new meanings and mutates as it descends the social hierarchy. State educational provision is a two-sided relationship, with teachers contributing as much to the final institutional solutions as do politicians and policy makers (p. 156).

This approach has value for the reasons noted but there must be care taken not to reify 'policy intentions' as an object rather than view it as a process of changing relations[9].

The third type of study labelled *implementation studies* 'overlaps' with trajectory studies. Their aim is the deconstruction of policy texts and the analysis of their interpretation. The focus here is on how interpretation and use of policy documents is a matter of struggle to control meanings. The construction of "the New Right" as a definable group and the debate over 'their' aims and goals in education, the counter arguments presented by 'left wing' educators as has been prominent both overseas and in New

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[9] This will be considered in further detail below.

Zealand is a good example of this (Codd, 1988). The *Administering for Excellence* Report (Taskforce to Review Educational Administration, 1988), now referred to as Picot, in New Zealand has been reified to a unique position within educational debate and its very name has developed sets of connotations reflecting the way people use the name Picot in debate. This has been repeated in the development of the term *Tomorrow's Schools* which has its origins in a report of the same name but the name now has a separate identity from the report from which it derives..

Maguire and Ball (1994) believes these three types of study all make use of qualitative research and have a strong commitment to theory including theories of state, post-structuralism and post-modernism and class analysis. The move to bring the macro and micro together within policy studies has begun but they point out that there are weaknesses that need more work, in particular the methodological approaches used. If this is true then there is a greater possibility that the issues described above inherent in the dichotomy of the micro and macro have not been resolved. To complicate matters Maguire and Ball (1994) find that there have developed two 'formations' of qualitative study in Britain. The 'traditional' work focusing on social justice where people are the subject of study and newer forms currently attracting funding where policies are the subject of study. These newer studies generally use interviewing as the major form of data gathering as that is what attracts the funding. The limits, as a result, are that people are only 'heard' in relation to policy rather than getting a broader understanding of their lives. Those researchers that actually engage in a field of action as participant or non-participant, to observe and record, are fewer in number.

There is acknowledgement above of the idea that policy is not something that is done to people and schools yet researchers still bring the macro and micro together with variations of this in mind. Government policy is usually considered as top-down change and what happens as a result is usually interpreted as a response to the use of power for example the term resistance to change (Gillborn, 1994). The difficulties I believe are the result of the way change is conceptualised at the macro level as top-down process: 'the intention of policy is to bring about reform in schools', and this is carried over when explaining policy at the micro level, which is conceived of as a continuation of this process.

Change itself can be referred to in many ways: sometimes it is what people intend to do or what policy is meant to bring about; the process by which systems such as schools alter; or it might refer to the actual outcomes that result from the process (Fullan, 1991). In the previous quote above from Riseborough all three forms of change: policy intention, mutation, and solution, are used. This can lead to difficulties conceptualising and discussing exactly what is the nature of change. Change is described as policy intention at the macro level and the resultant solutions at the micro level. Intention - becoming solution - is carried out by a process of change, in this case described as a mutation.

What has been acknowledged as important is that change as a process is multifaceted and historical (Bowe, Ball, & Gold, 1992). One of the difficulties with the idea of giving prominence to policy over people in policy sociology is a tendency to give national policy primacy in terms of creating change and being attributed as the cause of outcomes at the micro-level when schools in fact have so much else happening. Moving beyond looking for a single cause for change is difficult to do because of the way we conceptualise it, that is to look for direct causes. Also, this is often reflected in the methodologies we use to explore such change.

Some of the research into policy has as yet been to reactionary. There is a tendency to study policy formulation, and sometimes its subsequent implementation, and then say why it will not work, or why it is not working, followed with the conclusion that the policy is flawed because it is 'reproducing and exaggerating' social inequalities. The research is tending to not move beyond this view by looking for what would make the policy workable or what policies would achieve the desired outcomes (Power, 1992)[10]. The more cynical researchers believe that the reason for the above result is that policy is there to legitimate inequality that may lead to negative outcomes for certain groups in society. Another

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[10] People are starting to consider what policies would be required to 'realise a programme of egalitarian and democratic reform'. Jones and Hatcher (Jones & Hatcher, 1994) and Brown and Lauder (Brown & Lauder, 1992) are beginning the move to develop alternatives.

contradiction in policy research is the way in which approved policy is criticised for being unable to affect change yet researchers are convinced of the efficacy of policy of which they disapprove. Thus research fails because it is either effective but philosophically flawed or it is philosophically desirable but ineffective. Either way it is a no win situation (Power, 1992). Similar approaches have been taken in the New Zealand setting which lead to some curious changes in stances over educational policy. The academic sociologists once critical of teaching as a profession now rally to its support as benign and altruistic in the face of outside criticism. This reflects the changing alliances that groups make in order to gain ascendancy in public debate (Mac an Ghaill, 1991).

Another tendency of researchers is to believe that the unintended "constitutes" the "real" intentions (Power, 1992). The speculation about unintended and intended outcomes leads and arises out of a suspicion of 'Big Brother' and other conspiracy theories. Within the present educational policy debate this has centred around the 'New Right' as a collective of people and ideas which are easier to postulate rather than identify

> The philosophy of the so-called New Right can be seen as one expression of the new politics which emerged in the 1970s....The New Right encompasses a wide range of groups and ideas, and there are many internal divisions and conflicts (Chitty, 1989, p. 211).

While trying to consider whether this might be because the New Right is more conceptual than actual, Chitty continues to postulate the reality of the group - a form of constitution through discourse (Fairclough, 1989):

> [The] New Right is also confused and divided over its attitude towards vocational studies. New Right academics dislike, for example, the main methodological and cross curricular concerns...
>
> [Still there are] differences among those who would see themselves as members of the New Right,... (Chitty, 1989, p. 218).

Ball (1990) finds his analysis of qualitative material (from a study of current British educational policy formulation) better explained by using three ideologies developed by Raymond Williams rather than using the term New Right.

> Education policy is not simply a direct response to dominant interests... and might best be understood: '...not

> as reflecting the interests of one social class (commonly the industrial middle class), but as responding to a complex and heterogeneous configuration of elements (including ideologies that are residual or emergent, as well as currently dominant)' (Svi Shapiro in Ball, 1990, p. 3).

This over generalisation produced at the macro level of research is one of the difficulties of working in this way without drawing on sufficient micro level material to inform the discussion.[11] Without the qualitative data that people have started to produce it is difficult to confirm or deny the conceptualisations that are used to account for policy development. The work of Ball (1990) and Mac an Ghaill (1991) highlight the complexities and challenge the macro theorists to integrate their findings[12]. This also raises another macro-micro issue not mentioned above - the problem of reductionism. That which is claimed to be the cause of an effect at the macro-level tends to disintegrate when examined at the micro-level. Another difficulty of course, concerning the moral nature of policy, is where people are writing for political ends as much as epistemological reasons. This is not to say that the political and epistemological are separate as there are times when research is taken up and used in politics.

Reductionism is also a problem for policy sociologists in other ways. Maguire and Ball (1994) believe that there is an advantage in bringing policy to the foreground rather than people when using qualitative research to study policy. But, as Power (1992) notes, it is important that

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[11]This is in addition to problem noted earlier by Ozga (1987) where some of the concepts used by macro theorists cannot be operationalized at the macro level suggesting they may be invalid. Hargreaves (1983) cites the concept of relative autonomy, developed by macro theorists to resolve the problem of structure and agency, as an example of this. But when it is examined closely it has no correlation at the micro-level.

[12] Note the discussion between Lawton (1993) and Gordon & Pearce (Gordon & Pearce, 1993) in the way they attempt to account for the evidence and the different approaches they would like to use. I suspect the differing paradigm preferences may account for alternative interpretations, but at the same time some of the debate results from the difficulty of having constructive discussion to establish exactly what the other means via journal articles.

policy does not remain there - isolated from other research where people are in the foreground. Even within policy sociology it is possible to narrow study to particular aspects of policy. Halpin and Fitz (Halpin & Fitz, 1990) outline five tasks they saw as a necessary part in researching the policy and outcomes of grant maintained schools in Britain. The five tasks were to:

(i) make a comparative study with other national policy that had implemented similar forms of administration;

(ii) 'trace the historical origins of, and ideological antecedents to the policy;

(iii) research the micro-political development at the national level;

(iv) quantify the development in terms of numbers and types of schools involved in such policy; and

(v) research to assess the actual implementation process through a range of decision-making levels.

The ways of increasing understanding around the development of policy are wide and varied and each can inform the other as to the role of policy at the macro level. The challenge which they recognise is that there is not the theory to integrate the material from such a wide range of tasks so that at present it seems like an eclectic approach. This has also occurred in the present study so a list of the key concepts, drawn from a range of disciplines, that will be used at various stages of the data analysis can be found at the end of this chapter.

I will now provide an outline of an article by Shilling (1992) which makes explicit use of Gidden's theory of structuration to elaborate on the way in which educational sociologists may bridge the macro-micro gap when undertaking research in areas such as policy sociology. The starting point for his work is that "ethnographic studies tend to neglect the fact that events are not produced uniquely by autonomous individuals" (p. 73) but recognises that some researchers have attempted to resolve this issue by 'bridging' the structure - agency dualism. He reviews the efforts of Hargreaves, Hammersley and Ozga and Lawn who all take a different approach to resolving the dualism but according to Shilling fail.

In his evaluation of Hargreaves work in the area of classroom coping strategies Shilling acknowledges the value of considering how wider social constraints limit the individual creativity of students attempting to

cope in the classroom. His criticism is that Hargreaves maintains the duality whereby structure places limits on peoples' agency and the end result is not so much a linking of society to the classroom but a focus on the institution - classroom relationship. "Hargreaves simply seeks to restrict the explanatory capacity of the sociology of education" (Shilling, 1992. p. 74) with the result that the macro-micro is left unresolved.

Shilling's view of Hammersley's work is that "he assumes that theoretical progress can be achieved before structure - agency dualism is addressed", however, his work in "the search for causal regularities assumes the existence of mechanisms that reproduce familiar patterns of events" (p. 75). The end result is that his theorising leaves no place for people to act differently, that is, choose not to follow familiar patterns of interaction. At the same time his aim of looking for causalities tends to narrow the search for those things that have an influence in social interaction rather than seeking to demonstrate the complexity of life.

Lastly, Shilling describes Ozga and Lawns thesis as an attempt to move beyond the state theorists accounts for teacher's work by "focusing on the social construction of skill in analysing teachers' work" (p. 76). Yet the approach they use results in "descriptions of teachers' work which are bereft of theory" (p. 77) because the labour process theory fails to act as an explanatory concept in their account of their micro data.

I might attempt to compare these three approaches to accounts of a game of chess. Hargreaves theorising focuses on describing the range of moves any particular piece on the board might make at any particular time during a game according to the rules for that piece. I may be able to move a bishop to any one of eleven places (signifying agency) but there are many places I cannot place the bishop because the rules place limits on how and therefore where in a game the bishop may move. Hammersley is attempting to expound the rules that govern the movement of pieces which prevents him considering ways that people manage to change the rules in life. Lastly Ozga and Lawn's work is like descriptions of where on the board pieces have been moved without a broader account of what the chess player may be attempting to do, for example attack, defend, sacrifice etc.

Unfortunately there is more to social interaction than there is in a chess game because the 'rules' for social interaction do change and people are not controlled and co-ordinated by a chess player making it more difficult to give macro accounts of social interaction where there are many individuals with their own agency.

The next question to ask is where does one start looking for micro-accounts of behaviour that may be linked back to the macro? Shilling (1992) gives the following answer based on ideas of Gidden's described earlier.

> Structuration theory explains regularities of behaviour primarily in terms of the deep seated need humans have for *ontological security;* the need to maintain a sense that the natural and social worlds are as they appear to be, and that the view of self and social identities that individuals have are stable and reliable. So people tend to regularly to draw on the same types of rules and resources in social interaction as not to do so would threaten their basic 'security system'....It may be more profitable to consider the possibility that such beliefs and actions are prompted more from a familiarity with routine and a sense of what is 'natural'. (p. 83)

This provides a starting point for the current study. What are the beliefs that guide action? How do they indicate a sense of natural? The answers to these questions will be operationalised by searching for explicit and implicit expectations in peoples' accounts of their activities as trustees. The expressed beliefs about particular activities will indicate what the wider expectations are in terms of what is natural in the wider context of educational administration. In the context of a new group sharing new activities much of the discussion will reflect the discursive consciousness of actors who "are able to articulate about social conditions and the contexts surrounding their own behaviour" (Shilling, 1992, p. 82) and others before it becomes part of the taken-for-granted of trustee activities.

The present study will use two forms of ethnography; non-participant observation and interviewing to gather data about the way people are 'making sense' of their board activities. The results chapters in this study (chapters 4, 5 and 6) 'describe' the activities that the subjects were engaging in (Hammersley, 1992) and the study will then make use of a hermeneutic and phenomenological approach to ethnography in order to

gain an understanding through a sharing of their understandings in order to identify their expectations of their evolving social positions. Having gained a micro understanding, the next part of the analysis is to show how it impacts on our macro understanding of policy by elaborating on the structural rules and resources that are being actively reproduced as part of a board's on-going existence. This is the most theoretically open part of the study as the connections made by the researcher have not been laid down in any procedure.

Chapter 3
Method

Setting

The data collection was conducted in Dunedin, New Zealand during the middle of 1991. A city of some 100,000 people on the south east coast of the South Island it serves the large hinterland of Otago. There were 79 primary and intermediate schools and 11 secondary schools in the Dunedin district in 1994 (Data Management Section, 1994). Of the 79 primary and intermediate schools 67 were state schools (6 of these were intermediates), 11 were integrated and there was 1 independent school. There were also 11 secondary schools of which 3 are integrated and 1 independent.

Sample

The sample of 5 primary schools were selected from the greater urban area of Dunedin. It was decided to include primary schools spread throughout Dunedin in the study but the major criterion for inclusion was determined by the day of the month during which board of trustees meetings were held. A number of boards hold their meetings on the same night each month. In general, trustee meetings tend to be held in the evening on a Monday to Thursday toward the end of the month. So the selection of schools for this study was done on the basis of finding boards that did not have meetings on the same night. As this was an ethnographic study the number of schools chosen bore no relation to the total number of schools in the Dunedin area as the intention was not to make inferences based on statistical analysis (Strauss, 1987).

The schools were given pseudonyms to provide anonymity even though the majority of information was obtained through attending public meetings of the board of trustees of each school. The pseudonyms used were the Greek letters Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta, and Epsilon.

In Table 1 on the following page is information about the five boards of trustees and their contributing primary schools. This information was obtained as part of the feedback from the boards.

Procedure

For the purposes of this report the data gathering component has been divided into two phases representing the different times that contact was made with the boards. Phase one represents the non-participant observation and Phase two represents the interviewing.

Phase one

The initial problem for many researchers is gaining access to the social setting they wish to study (Patton, 1980). Board of trustee meetings are public and therefore I could not be denied access to these events. To be designated Public in New Zealand means that they come within the legislation provided under the *Local Authorities and Public Bodies Meetings Act, 1987* and the *Official Information Act, 1987*. However, rather than attending without introducing myself, each school was notified by letter (Appendix A) of why I wished to attend and what I was hoping to achieve. In addition I asked permission to tape their meetings. While this may not have been necessary because the meetings were public I felt that it was important to allow them to decide so they would be more relaxed about my being there and those who declined permission for taping would not leave things unsaid because of it. Two of the five boards (Alpha and Delta) gave permission for their meetings to be taped. There were times during meetings that were being taped when I was asked to stop recording for a period so that people could discuss a 'sensitive' matter without it. I always agreed to such requests.

I attended five meetings of each of the five boards of trustees over the period April to September. I also attended the annual general meeting of each board of trustees as well as one subcommittee meeting of one of the boards.

Table 1

Description of Boards of Trustees and their Schools

School	Alpha	Beta-	Delta	Gamma	Epsilon
Roll[13]	250-300	150-200	200-250	250-300	100-150
Staff					
Full-time teaching staff (including principals)	12	12	12	14	7
Part-time teaching staff	2	3	1	1	0
Full-time non-tchg staff	3	5	0	7	0
Part-time non-tchg staff	2	7	3	3	2
Board of trustees[14]					
Elected members	5	5	4	5	5
Co-opted members		2	2	1	1
Male	4 (5)	3	4 (6)	4 (6)	3 (4)
Female	2 (3)	4 (6)	2	2	3 (4)
Subcommittees:	Charter Maori Employ-ment	Finance Mainten-ance Policy Fund-raising	Finance Grounds & buildings Personnel	Finance Property Appointm ents Temp-orary policy	Finance Grounds - buildings Personnel Commun-ity & PR Policy & Charter
Special features of school	attached unit dental clinic	attached unit dental clinic equity grant	attached unit dental clinic equity grant	attached unit dental clinic	attached unit

[13]Numerical ranges have been used to render more difficult the identification of schools.

[14]Number in the brackets is the number of males or females including principal and staff.

Field techniques

Notes

Notes were taken during all meetings, but for those which were being audio taped, notes were taken to give a quick summary of what topics of discussion were covered in the meeting. At the meetings of boards which were not recorded on audio tape more detailed notes were recorded. This detail would include the topics of discussion, summaries of verbal reports presented by subcommittees and other general business as it arose. Quotes from members of the boards were noted if it indicated a particular stand or opinion on a topic and could be compared with contrasting views.

Taping

A small portable battery powered tape recorder with a flat based microphone was used to record meetings. Ninety minute tapes were used for recording which meant they had to be turned over every 45 minutes and replaced every hour and a half. In general all members were clearly audible with minor problems being caused by failing battery power.

Transcribing

Tapes were transcribed by three people employed for the task. They were provided with a variable speed tape recorder, headphones and a computer. The following instructions were provided as a guide for the transcribers in their task:

> Transcription of taped meetings - 13/5/91
>
> Some voices will be clearer than others but do what you can. When there is a part that you cannot make out type some #### to let me know.
>
> The quality of voice reproduction can be improved by making sure that the tone control is on treble, that the tape heads on the machine are clean etc. Also it is easier to pick up the voices with head phones. The type of headphones used can also make a difference.
>
> The Format:
>
> 1. Each time a different speaker begins leave a blank line.

2. Do not worry about trying to identify speakers.

3. It is important to get down word for word what a person says and where you are in doubt use #####.

4. When someone pauses or puts a gap in their speaking use ..... for example, He was wearing a..black hat. (each dot represents about 1/2 a second) If there is a gap of 4 or more seconds start a new line.

5. Do not worry about recording peoples' agreements as a person is speaking for example, mmmm, uh ha, yeah etc, unless it is in response to a question.

6. If there is general agreement/disagreement to a question by the group record as follows: group: yes, or group: no, and so on.

7. If there are things happening that would add to the speech content then please indicate in brackets, for example, (the group laughed) or (there was a knock on the door), and so on.

8. If there are two or more speakers whose speech runs through each other then indicate with a [(square bracket) to indicate where this started, for example:

I do not believe this [will work.

[but are there alternatives?

[It has to.

(in this case two other people have interrupted the speaker at the same point)

At such times do not leave a blank line between speakers, also the introduction of the [is approximate, that is as close as you can make out the interruption to within one or two words.

9. There may be other points you are not sure about. The best thing is to decide for yourself, be consistent and then record at the top of the transcript what you have done, or call me.

From the transcripts, segments of interest were identified as important for analysis (see data analysis section) and I then reviewed the segments

checking for accuracy and putting in markers to identify each speaker according to their role on the board, (e.g. principal, chairperson etc).

Phase two

Having attended the meetings, the material from the five boards were summarised and drafted into reports. Two of the five schools were recorded on tape and these were transcribed. An example of the beginning of each report, which was addressed to the board of trustees and explained the nature of the report and requested their cooperation in clarifying any misunderstandings I may have made, has been included in Appendix B. Specific components of the process used to develop the reports appear below.

Field techniques

Reports

Reports were drafted from notes and other information taken from board meetings such as minutes of the previous meeting or the annual AGM report. The following comments appeared in the reports to indicate what I was wanting to achieve:

> As you are aware, although I sat in on the meetings, I was never part of the group and so this meant that there are things I may have misunderstood. In order to overcome this and avoid misrepresenting your board I would appreciate your help by making some comments on my summary. There are also some occasions about which I am not sure of the outcome or how they were arrived at and so I am not able to give a complete and proper account of them. If you could supply some of the details it would also be appreciated....
>
> There are a number of sections that follow. The first is a short summary of school statistics, the second is the format of your meeting, the third is a brief paragraph that outlines the types of activities that I saw your board taking part in and the fourth is a summary of events or concerns about which the board spent some time in discussion.

To clarify what I meant by "events" or "concerns" in the above statement, section 4 of each report began with the following comment:

Events and Concerns.

> Within this ongoing activity of the board there was discussion on matters which I might call your focal concerns. There were certain concerns that required some discussion and clarification which in turn created some debate. I identified concerns as those that in the end may have required more information to resolve, and concerns that required some discussion before a final decision could be made. There could have been other concerns, which may have been of importance to the board but were given little attention at the meetings. On these I am not in a position to report. The concerns I have reported on are... The matters of concern that are not reported on are....

This was followed by the next statement:

> There are a number of matters which the board discussed where I am unclear about the sequence of events. Also there are gaps in my knowledge about certain events. Throughout the report you will find comments made by me that indicate particular points on which I am unclear. I would appreciate it if you could supply the missing information or correct any errors in my report. I am also aware that the length of time since these meetings occurred is getting ever larger, if you cannot recall the details please note that. Likewise if there is disagreement, if you should be responding as a group, then please also record upon what matter it was. In some places I will be reporting on a single issue that occurred and in others it will be a theme that arose a number of times over the months that I was present.

The reports themselves were constructed by going over notes and identifying focal concerns. There is a description of focal concerns in the section on analysis later in this chapter. Each discussion about a topic was then collated with similar discussions about the same topic during the same meeting or that occurred in other meetings. This allowed the creation of a list of concerns that indicated in which meeting they were discussed and where in the meeting they were discussed. A summary of each concern was then made which included all the available information from each discussion or documented subcommittee report.

Not all summaries were included in the report. Those concerns which may have arisen only once or raised very little discussion were left out. Despite this, reports were still between 25 and 40 pages long. The next step was to invite trustees to participate in an interview in order to clarify material in the report.

Interviews

Each school was asked within the report to allow some sort of follow-up to the report. This request was on the last page of the report as part of the closing statement.

> This then is the end of my report.
>
> Thank you for reading this and helping where you could. I appreciate it.
>
> For the last part of my research I am looking for volunteers to answer some questions for me either by questionnaire or by interview. These questions would be to do with how you remember your expectations of your role in the board prior to your actual election, how these views have changed given your experiences and what advice you might give to those who may be elected next year in terms of what to expect. Such responses would be kept confidential.

The interviews were conducted as part of the clarification of the reports and so in a sense they were semi-structured interviews. Some people provided extra feedback to the report over the telephone, others agreed to an interview at their school and one interview was conducted at University. The interview format consisted in working through the report clarifying issues and then if the interviewee was willing the second part of the interview was based on discussing a list of questions which were designed to illuminate the background perspectives that the interviewee brought to the interview.

This second part included questions such as:

What were your initial hopes for the board of trustees in schools?

Which eventuated?

Which disappeared?

Were there any unintended consequences?

How would you summarise the board of trustees role at the moment?
What are the major causes of concern for your board of trustees?
Are there any positive signs for the future?
How would you describe the board's relationship with the national and local Ministry of Education?

These responses were then written up as notes and kept with the particular report which they were associated with.

Contextual Material

Over the time of the study other material was collected. At the time it was not anticipated how it might be used but it was believed that it would contextualise issues that the boards were discussing in terms of what was happening locally and nationally. The bulk of this material was made up of newspaper clippings from *The Otago Daily Times*. This included articles about the schools within the study as well as local and national reports about other educational and related happenings that may have arisen as points of discussion at the board of trustee meetings. The local community papers (*The Weekender* and *The Midweek*) also included information and many of the schools would use the regular "suburb" column to tell the community what had been happening at their school. Other material appeared in the New Zealand Education Institute newsletter *ROUROU*. The majority of this material was collected, dated and put into scrap books.

Analysis

After reports had been sent to schools for verification and returned with additional notes appended to correct and clarify misunderstandings, and interviews conducted to follow up on reports, the data was then ready for further analysis. This next stage of the study involved categorising the focal concerns identified within the descriptive themes of finance, property, community relationships, educational objectives, personnel and governance.

Focal concerns as described by Millar (1969) are "areas or issues which command widespread and persistent attention and a high degree of emotional involvement" (p334). There may be some attempt to rank concerns on the basis on importance to a group but in the present study

determining such would require further work without adding new insights although later analysis may show how focal concerns are interrelated. The focal concerns are developed as part of phase two of the procedure described above. The manipulation of data to identify these concerns was facilitated by using the computer application called *Nudist* which is specifically designed to manage more efficiently the qualitative research processes of indexing and sorting. The results of this analytical process are presented in: chapter 4 Finance and Property; chapter 5 Community relationships and Educational Objectives; and chapter 6 Personnel and Governance[15].

The value of focal concerns as a baseline concept in analysing data is that it is easily derived from field observations, in a relative sense it is descriptively neutral, and it makes possible more refined analysis of behaviour because it still reflects actual behaviour (Miller, 1969).

By looking at collections of focal concerns it was possible to identify sets of tensions or a *language of dilemmas* . The expression of these dilemmas point to contradictions, ambiguities and ambivalence that people have which reflect peoples' understandings of the activities that they undertake. Dilemmas are "a means of representing in language the diverse and apparently contradictory patterns of schooling. Dilemmas do not represent static ideas waiting at bay in the mind, but an unceasing interaction of internal and external forces, a world of continuous transformations" (Berlak & Berlak, 1981, p. 133). Peoples' identification of dilemmas also imply an expectation about the way that a particular social context should be. These dilemmas arose as themes that work across the focal concerns. It was possible to identify them by actively seeking out the similarities in descriptions. The findings from the analysis of data from this study are presented in chapter 7. It was possible to identify these same dilemmas being repeated in the New Zealand literature described in chapter 1 and so the same analysis was repeated on this material to

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[15]These categories while emerging from the data were similar to the classification in the *Lough Report.* (Education Reform Implementation Process Team, 1990)

support the themes developed in chapter 7. The results of this analysis are presented in chapter 8.

Additional key concepts

The analysis of data draws on concepts from a range of theoretical areas that may not have been explicitly referred to above or described in the first two chapters. The following concepts are used in chapter 8 for analysis:

1) *Structural policy*

> follows the imperative of keeping output constant, that is at levels that are considered reasonable or affordable, while channelling demand inputs in a way that appears compatible with available resources.

Conjunctural policy

> seeks to maximise the adequacy of policy responses to problems as they emerge and appear on the agenda.
>
> (Offe cited in Codd, 1990, p. 34)

4) McGregor's *X and Y Theory* (Rainey, 1993)

McGregor believed that the discipline of industrial management was dominated by the view that

> since workers lack the capacity for self-motivation and self-direction, managers must structure organisations and incentive systems to closely control, reward, and punish workers - theory X. (p. 25)

whereas he felt that a better approach would be to recognise that

> workers have strivings... for growth, development, interesting work, and self-actualisation... [and so] managers and organisations must take steps to employ participative management styles, decentralised decision-making, revised performance evaluation procedures that emphasise self-evaluation and objectives set by the employee, and job enlargement to make jobs more interesting and responsible - Theory Y. (p. 25)

Ethical Issues of confidentiality

While the information was in general gathered from public meetings I have endeavoured to keep their identify undisclosed. Many of the people I came into contact with were very generous and open with providing other information beyond what was gathered in the meetings and I would like to respect their wishes for anonymity, hence the use of pseudonyms. However, in a place as small as Dunedin some people may be in a position to identify the particular schools. I therefore urge those reading this thesis to also respect the trust between researcher and the subjects that made this report possible and ask you to not attempt to identify the boards and their schools.

Chapter 4

Financial and Property Management

Finance

As the Picot Report (Taskforce to Review Educational Administration, 1988) foresaw:

> All budgeting and allocation of funds will be done by the board within the bulk grant....The board will also be responsible for the preparation and audit of the institution's accounts (p. 49).

In practice this led to the schools working on a wide range of financial activities including budgeting, fundraising, determining school fees and setting up financial administration systems.

Accounts

Two of the boards, Alpha and Delta, were in the process of computerising their accounts. This seemed to absorb a large amount of treasurers' and principals' time. The change in systems in all cases resulted in a change in financial reporting which then required time at meetings to elaborate and inform other trustees on how the new system would work and how this would effect financial reporting at meetings. For the Alpha and Delta boards this meant a change in how accounts were presented to board members with additional time required showing trustees how to 'read' the accounts, for example, showing that while it might appear as though budgets were overspent many items are bought at the beginning of the year which raises the 'variance' on a budget calculated and reported on 12 equal months. The treasurers, and often principals, then were engaged in the ongoing education of other trustees in respect of financial management. This would also become apparent in aspects of property management. Treasurers were busy revising the way they worked based on recently received reports of accountants' analyses of the first year's accounts. Changes included minuting in financial reports items of capital expenditure over $250 and the minuting of who has responsibility for specific areas of the budget (budget holders).

Beta board had already computerised its accounts and was working on networking their pupils' records with the accounts software kept in different places within the school. The principal proposed the setting up of a network to link up the various computers already held and the person coming in monthly to do the accounts, a parent, had offered to set up a system. The principal pointed out to the BoT that they were responsible for a lot of records and large numbers of these records were created through their attached units. With money set aside and a decision made to go ahead an interesting problem occurred. The parent in the computer trade providing support and advice was involved with business problems and was unable to continue supporting the school. This same board had already been having difficulties with getting back accounts from the Ministry approved auditors who for internal reasons had taken well over the 90 day limit. The principal noted: "Yes in the end the school was audited eight times by members of that office...*the company* acknowledges their error and recorded it"

The auditors acknowledged the problem as theirs which was important for the school as a number of schools were being accused of being late and the Ministry was threatening to halt operational funding unless they arrived. These matters were reported in the local newspaper:

> Just seven Otago schools and four in Southland have still to submit their audited 1990 financial statements to the Ministry of Education....The Ministry has threatened to withhold any further funding from schools until the statements are in. The Ministry released to the media and published in the *Education Gazette* the names of about 600 schools overdue with their accounts in April. Twenty-six Otago schools were listed. Some have since reacted (*sic*) angrily to the public criticism of the lateness of their accounts, saying the delays were not their fault.....'At least half the cases have got nothing to do with the board of trustees at all. It's been caused by the hold-ups in the audit system itself'. (Lawson, 1992b, p. 2)

It was later reported that 56 schools around New Zealand missed out on their October grant paid to schools on September 29 because their accounts had not been received by auditors (Lawson, 1992c, p. 3).

Delta and Epsilon were still working on their 1991 budget during the middle of that year which had advantages and disadvantages. People on

boards had made comments that budgeting for the first year had been rather difficult to judge because there was little information on which to base allocations to various categories of spending. So it was better to wait until a complete year's set of accounts had been processed to provide information for their current year. Delta board treasurer described their first year's budgeting as a "blow out" unlike Alpha and Epsilon which had described their first year's budgeting as very conservative and so had been able to return a surplus. Delta's deficit was covered by using reserves for maintenance that was still being negotiated in their property occupancy document. The negotiations moved in favour of the school so the money previously allocated as maintenance reserves was reallocated as a surplus, thus eliminating the deficit. At the time, however, Delta did not know that their reserves were actually a surplus, creating some uncertainty but also relief in the outcome of the property occupancy document negotiations.

For Epsilon, however, a number of factors were going to make another surplus almost impossible to achieve. The school was designed for a roll twice as big so the school was in the position of maintaining itself from funding whose maintenance provision was based on a smaller roll. This was complicated by a number of factors and a range of solutions were looked at. These will be discussed later under a section on the roll except to say that the non-teaching salaries were identified as being too high for a school of this size. This had been calculated by looking at the financial reports of seven other schools. The immediate solution was considered to be to reduce the caretaker's hours. This was despite the board sending the caretaker a letter 'reassuring' the caretaker his position was not in jeopardy.

The caretaker had only recently joined the school and it would not be until the end of the year that the board would be able to 're-evaluate job specifications'. It was later decided to make changes to the 1992 budget for caretaking and cleaning rather than the current year's budget. The change decided upon was to contract out these tasks. This led to some conflict which was made more difficult as the caretaker had been appointed staff representative to the board for 1992. The final outcome was the caretaker resigning and the hours for caretaking being reduced. The roles of caretaker and cleaner were combined and the new person has close to half

the number of hours previously allocated, to do both jobs. Thus financial management has a number of social outcomes creating short term difficulties in order to maintain the institution in the longer term.

At the time the school was first working on this problem the government had published a review of operational activities which had recognised the submissions of the School Trustees Association, the New Zealand Education Institute and the Post Primary Teachers Association which all advocated that funding for schools' caretaking, cleaning and grounds' maintenance be based on a property related basis rather than on a current per pupil basis. The Report (Ministry of Education, 1991) presented the two options as an either/or alternative for the minister to consider. The decision was considered 'fiscally neutral' but the argument against removing per pupil funding was that it "would remove from boards the need to recognise and face the real cost of property as an input, and it would remove any incentive for boards to release surplus assets" (Ministry of Education, 1991, p. 10). However, another recommendation that would impact on this was a consideration to implement a rental scheme , also called capital charging (Stone, 1991).

The report also recognised the difficulty that schools like Epsilon were under in changing funding in the area of caretaking and cleaning.

> 4.6 Note: Industrial agreements have an influence on the funding provided to schools for cleaning, and vice-versa. The recently settled School Caretakers and Cleaners Award has granted cleaners a wage increase. It may be easier for boards to make changes in work hours for school cleaners from the beginning of 1992 (Ministry of Education, 1991, p. 11)

Thus it might be hypothesised that other schools around New Zealand were going through the same difficulties that the Epsilon board of trustees was working through. This is based on the acknowledgement of the problem in the above report which had been brought to the attention of the review team by teachers and trustees groups. Earlier reports suggested that many schools had dismissed cleaners or reduced hours as one of the first means of reducing such costs (New Zealand Press Association, 1989a, p. 2; New Zealand Press Association, 1989b, p. 3). It may well be that such cost cutting was the result of budgeting in the face of uncertainty rather than not having the money available given that many schools did return a

surplus at the end of 1990. The difficulty is knowing whether such cost cutting actually made the surpluses possible.

Other discussion of board matters arose out of media information on issues that boards were not informed about by other sources. One such example arose from some members of the Delta board viewing a television news report that claimed that Goods and Services Tax would now be charged on income that had previously been exempt, and that this would be done retrospectively. Delta school had received a number of grants that it had used to pay for wages of non-teaching salaries. It may have been possible to claim the money back if it had been spent on goods but as it was not the board would be out of pocket by some $3 000. This compounded the board's deficit and money that may have been available to continue to hire the Restart employee who was working in the library would disappear. The grants at issue were from the New Zealand Employment Service used to employ Restart and Taskforce Green employees within the school. At the Delta school this consisted of $40 000 on which it would have to pay back $5 000 in GST. This also affected donations made to the school for specific purposes. For this reason schools preferred to have money given to the school for undesignated purposes to avoid the GST. This would become important for money raised by groups such as the Parent Teachers Association discussed later.

Locally raised funds

The boards' annual financial reports would differentiate between income from the government and 'locally raised funds'. For three of the schools where these reports were available there was some variation in the percentage of the total school income that was made up of locally raised funds. For Epsilon, Alpha and Delta their percentages were 10.7, 23.0 and 26.9 respectively. The figures for Alpha and Delta look to be quite significant and at approximately 25 percent would suggest that there is a variation in resources that a school might draw on from within their communities. This was publicly supported by the government with

> The Associate Minister of Education, Mr Luxton, yesterday urging schools to look at ways to earn more money....[H]e said he had always considered schools were far too controlled by a central bureaucracy which did not allow for differences in circumstances or exceptions....Mr Luxton

> said the Government wanted schools to run as a business without intervention. "We are concentrating on creating the appropriate business environment and do not think government intervention is a function we should indulge in", he said. New Zealand was not a wealthy country and had to learn to live within its means. Schools could help by looking at ways to earn money. "I encourage innovation and initiative and I know there are many boards of trustees willing to look for new ways to better utilise and earn more money for their schools" (New Zealand Press Association, 1991e, p. 4).[16]

In fact the Audit Office felt that maybe schools were doing too well at raising its own funds and believed that many schools were not declaring all locally raised funds. This was expressed in the Audit Office's first comprehensive report on boards of trustees tabled in parliament.

> Many schools boards are keeping quiet about locally-raised funds because of fears state funding could be cut, according to the Audit Office. Mr Cameron said there was "considerable resistance" by boards and principals to fully disclose sources of income. "Any board which condones non-disclosure of funds, received by way of such activities as annual levies on parents, trading activities, recoveries from pupils and donations, places itself and the resources involved at risk," he said. "Parents and the community have a right to know the full extent to which they fund schools over and above what they contribute through state funding. There is a fear that disclosure of a high level of community support for a school may result in reduced state funding" (New Zealand Press Association, 1992a, p. 12).

Maybe the boards have weighed up the risk of disclosure and non-disclosure and the outcome as reported speaks for itself. Disclosing all activities to the government may put central funding at risk. None of the schools in the current study were seen to be hiding earnings although one had set up a trust which did give it the ability to get around problems of

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[16]Mr John Luxton is known to be one or the more right wing members of the National Government and it is difficult to assess how the reporter may have edited the story to read as the government wanting to withdraw from education but as I shall show later this interpretation was made by board members on other matters.

administration rather than hide earnings. The amount of locally raised funds could be interpreted as a failure on the part of government to meet its commitments to state education or reflect the success of boards in finding their own sources of income. With 1900 of the 2600 school financial reports to the year January 1991 returned to the Ministry of Education it was reported that

> State schools raise about 23% of their funding, excluding teachers' salaries, themselves from fees, donations and fundraising. The non-governmental funds schools raise an average $153.59 for each school pupil....schools raise at least $100 million themselves, in addition to the $500 million operational grant they receive from the Government to cover everything except teachers' salaries and major property expenses (New Zealand Press Association, 1992b, p. 4).

Alpha and Delta boards' locally funded income matches the national average mentioned in the above article quite closely but it should be remembered that in both cases a significant part of these funds were made up of grants for Restart and Taskforce Green workers from the New Zealand Employment Service which makes it effectively central funding. The difference is that it comes from the Vote: Labour rather than education. Withdrawing these amounts left Alpha and Delta boards with 16.1[17] and 9.0 per cent respectively. Epsilon also hired a Restart worker and its local funding percentage from total income dropped from 10.7 per cent to approximately 4.2 per cent. Thus local funding does not necessarily reflect money from the local community and what is provided from the local community is a lot less than the 23 per cent quoted above from the media. Never-the-less all forms of income contribute to the well-being of the school . Each of the three schools had put one these 'locally funded' employees to work in their libraries.

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[17]While Delta school is in what might be considered a "well off "suburb in Dunedin the bulk of the 16% income was raised from a one-off reunion donation. When this amount is withdrawn from locally raised funds the school had raised 5.0% from the local community which was below the budgeted 7.0%

Another distortion in reporting within the media was based around how much schools had in the bank after the first year of funding. Claims of an average of $60 000 in both primary and secondary schools bank accounts were used to claim that the government was not underfunding schools.

> Otago Schools had more than $9 million in the bank by the end of last year, according to Ministry of Education figures. That averages out at more than $60 000 for each of the 150 schools, although not all schools have that much. The Ministry says the figures support its contention that schools are not underfunded (Lawson, 1992d, p. 3).

It was not till later in the article that there was a description of the surpluses that schools were passing on from one financial year to the next. In 1990 Otago schools averaged surpluses of $26 680 which was reduced to $7544 in the 1991 financial year.[18] So while schools may average $60 000 in the bank most of this is committed in maintenance and asset replacement. The group manager of finance and support in the Ministry of Education in the above report explained the variation as a result of schools spending conservatively in their first year of activities given that no one knew what costs there were in running a school. Thus smaller surpluses represented more confidence in spending based on better information.

I might use the examples of Delta and Epsilon which were still working on their budgets for the current year in June six months into the 1991 year to add to this interpretation. They were still waiting for confirmation of their 1990 financial year in order to get the information required to assist their 1991 budgeting. Thus for these two schools they then only had to budget for the last six months of the year increasing their chances of accurately estimating the costs. For the three schools in this study where financial information was available there was quite a wide variation in surpluses returned to the 1991 year from 1990. Epsilon, Alpha and Delta returned surpluses of $9 117, $61 714 and $8 731 respectively. Only Alpha returned

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[18]The 1991 financial year was only 11 months long in order to change the financial year from 1 February - 31 January to 1 January - 31 December. Thus we should be comparing $7 544 with eleven twelfths of $26 680, a sum of $24 457. This represents an average reduction in surpluses of 70%.

a surplus above the average of $26 680 reported above. This board spent $1 440 more than they had budgeted for as income, but with an increasing roll ($16 159) and increased locally raised funds above forecasts ($31 886) they had a larger surplus than expected to pass on. While the locally raised funds were committed to specific purposes the other $30 000, half of which resulted from an increasing roll, gave this school a lot more latitude in its budgeting unlike Epsilon that was faced with a decreasing roll and was struggling to balance its 1991 budget as discussed above.

Fundraising

All schools were involved in a range of fundraising activities and how this was done depended on the role of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) or Home School Association (often referred to as the Home School). The links between boards and their respective PTAs will be considered in chapter 5 under community relations. The boards of the two smaller schools, Beta and Epsilon had specific subcommittees for fundraising with one considering setting up a trust and the other having already done so by mid - 1991.

School Fees[19]

All the schools were setting fees with varying success in obtaining the money from families with children at the school. Delta had its financial deficit turned into a surplus as a result of deferred maintenance and was now in a position to consider eliminating fees for 1992. This was considered a positive move in terms of marketing the school and also as a way of easing the financial pressure on parents. For 1991 it was decided to keep school fees at the same level as the previous year and emphasise to the school community that the fees had not increased.

> Because I know a lot of schools put their fees on at the beginning of the year, and it's quite tough...so I think you know, in saying that we'll keep it the same as last year in the meantime is probably a big help. (Delta, June 1991)

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[19] Schools are not allowed to charge compulsory fees and so the term may be misleading and some prefer to refer to the fees as donations. However, I do not believe they are tax deductible.

Beta school always found it difficult to obtain school fees from parents. It was designated a low income area and received an equity grant. A range of techniques had been tried to encourage payment - including offering parents the option to make small regular payments or reductions in fees for payments made early, this last option improving the returns. Providing feedback on how much had been collected over the year was proving ineffective at encouraging parents to pay their fees and so a new approach to be used in 1994 was to show parents how the fees were being spent.

Property and Maintenance

As a result of the changes to the administration of schools a rearrangement was made in terms of the management of school property and assets. All buildings and grounds would remain the property of the Crown and the boards of trustees would be responsible for all other assets and ongoing maintenance, but not capital works. Boards are

> required to comply with the negotiated conditions of any current asset management agreement, and implement a maintenance programme to ensure that the school's building and facilities provide a safe, healthy learning environment for students (O'Rourke, 1993, p. 3).

The above statement is taken from the National Administration Guidelines which is part of the National Education Guidelines[20] forming the main structure of each school's charter.

The Property Occupancy Document

In order to achieve the administration guidelines set out above the relationship between the crown and the board is formalised in the Property Occupancy Document (POD). This then becomes part of the school's charter of which one of the property objectives is to "comply with the conditions of the property occupancy agreement" (Department of Education, 1989, p. 16).

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[20]The other two components of the National Education Guidelines are the National Education Goals and the National Curriculum Statements. The most recent publication of these guidlines was in the *Education Gazette*, 1993, April 30.

Each school was to enter into negotiation with the District Office of the Ministry of Education in order to develop the POD. For the schools in this study there was quite a variation in terms of whether this could be considered straight forward or not. Alpha's POD was signed in November of 1990, Delta's in April 1991, Beta's at the 'end of' 1990, Epsilon's in May 1991 and Gamma's was signed early in 1991. The documents specify which 'deferred' maintenance was the responsibility of the Ministry so that boards could then start to plan for their own long term maintenance. Planning was usually over ten year periods. It had been hoped that boards would develop programmes for major and minor maintenance by October 1990 which were to be reviewed yearly as part of their charter responsibilities (Department of Education, 1989).

During discussion with Beta's principal and a trustee about their property occupancy document and on going maintenance the principal said " If there are problems in education they arise at Beta". Having signed the POD in 1990, which included the removal of an old outside toilet block and painting for some of the buildings with two tenths contribution from the school and development of playgrounds and some buildings, there were some doubts about whether the Ministry would honour the negotiations. The negotiated POD was described as being favourable to the school and board members were now wanting to make a start on some of the maintenance but not having received the POD back from the Ministry by July 1991 there was a feeling that the "rules can change" especially with a government budget scheduled for the end of July.

The idea that the Ministry could change the rules without renegotiation or consultation was based on boards' previous experiences in relation to charters and capital works development. In early 1990 changes were made to aspects of the charters that were considered central to specifying the responsibilities of the government to provide funding for education, maintaining of a relation of partnership between boards and government and the 'paramount principle' which stated that the 'needs of the children and their learning are paramount' (Collins, 1990, p. 4; New Zealand Press Association, 1990a, p. 3). The then Minister of Education, Mr Goff acknowledged that:

> Failure to consult education groups about changes to school charters was a mistake....Mr Goff has written to

> individual trustees to assure them the Government has not changed the direction or intent of school charters....Mr Goff says he had discussed the changes with education groups but was writing to trustees directly because "it is critical that the relationship between boards and the minister is one of mutual trust" (New Zealand Press Association, 1990b, p. 4).

This trust may have been lost and those schools, such as a local high school whose signed charter featured in the local newspaper, and who had signed their charter prior to the changes were not impressed by what amounted to a breach of contract (Lawson, 1990b, p. 2; Lawson, 1990a, p. 2). Having withdrawn the guarantee of funding in 1990 many boards found they were to receive less money than expected in 1991 (Lawson, 1990d, p. 3). The confusion at this time was compounded by a change of government and hence a new Minister of Education (Lawson, 1990c, p. 3). The new minister accounted for the reduction of money for schools as a result of increased rolls above anticipated numbers and the final outcome was a one per cent reduction in the per student rate (New Zealand Press Association, 1990c).

The next series of changes that were interpreted as unilateral involved the diversion of $350 million capital works money to deferred maintenance over a two year period (Lawson, 1991a, p. 1)[21]. This was encouraging for those boards who had signed their POD and were now waiting for work to start. However, there were no guarantees as to when the work would be done or in the case of Beta and Delta whether the Ministry would agree to ratify the negotiated agreements. The amount of money available for capital works had been reduced from $350 million to $50 million over two years. One local high school had already demolished its school hall on the basis that projects had been agreed to and money allocated:

> Kings High School cannot believe the Ministry of Education would allow it to demolish its hall, several

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[21]A $180 million grantto cover deferred maintenance was to come from the Labour Government's sale of Telecom, a state owned enterprise in telecommunications (New Zealand Press Association, 1990a, p. 3) but was on hold while the National Government reviewed the matter (Lawson, 1991a, p. 1).

> classrooms and a toilet block and then withdraw the money for rebuilding (Lawson, 1991b, p. 3).

Later it was announced that future funding of "new capital works in schools throughout the country is now dependent on a massive sell-off of Ministry of Education assets...The Ministry plans to sell off assets worth $75 million during the next two years to pay for new work" (New Zealand Press Association, 1991g, p. 4).

Confidence in the government not to make changes once agreements were made was not high even when the government had signed the 'dotted line'. So in July when Beta had not received its POD back from the Ministry there was speculation as to whether the Ministry of Education was holding onto it until after the government budget which was expected that same month. This was to be the first budget from the National Government since it had been in office and there had been much speculation that the budget, described as the 'mother of all budgets', would see large cuts in public spending. However, it eventuated that budget 'cuts' did not occur in the area of maintenance or capital works. Even so the Ministry did attempt to make further changes to the POD but because of some internal Ministry events they were never formalised and the POD signed in 1990 remains the only working copy.

When the Ministry started some of the deferred maintenance the Beta board felt the Ministry was slow to move and made 'minimal input' to the projects. Because of the urgency with which the board felt some of the projects had to be done they used their own money to complete some of them and then got the money back from the Ministry. During this time relations with the local Ministry were strained and it was difficult to gain a commitment in terms of resources or dates. Meetings with the local Ministry would not be minuted and there was some feeling that 'they would even create paperwork to obstruct' a commitment being made to POD projects. A comment made by a trustee from Beta was that "with all the energy going into dealing with these problems there is little left for putting into the children" (Beta, February 1994) and as will be shown on other matters trustees from Beta school to a certain extent felt "picked on".

Delta's POD was being negotiated in early 1991 and all indications were that they were going in favour of the school. The Ministry had accepted

90% of the responsibility for the repaint of the school and in the end they would pay 100% as the money from another project that did not eventuate would be used for the other 10%. Repairs to toilets and re-roofing of the school hall were also included. As reported in the case of Beta the only problem was when the projects could be done:

> That was a real coup that one, because we had been told that it was our responsibility entirely....The only catch there is that we might have to wait until they get the money to pay for their side of it. (Delta, April 1991)

Here was one occasion when confusion within the Ministry resulted in a positive outcome for the school. This was despite some of the maintenance items not making it into the POD and one item which had been included in the original being dropped without negotiation. However, Delta trustees believed that the Ministry was covering so much that anything else could be covered by funds being set aside for maintenance. Nothing was guaranteed even after the POD was signed and the Ministry later wanted to change one project so that what was originally to be replaced would now be repaired. The chairperson described the events in "negotiating the negotiated" as requiring some 'toings and froings' in order to resolve the change in interpretation. At this particular time no one from the Ministry had actually got up onto, or in, the roof to assess it. The Ministry was willing to bring an independent consultant in to consider the matter but the board agreed it did not matter. "At the end of the day that document is a valid legal document or it's not. If it is then there's no question." (Delta, July 1991). The Ministry did agree to replace the roof on closer inspection so no action was required on the part of the board to enforce their interpretation of the POD on this matter.

Epsilon trustees also had doubts about the Ministry's commitment to the school's POD. The school was to cover the cost of painting the buildings with the Ministry covering the painting of roofs. Typical comments were: "There were no guarantees that things would remain the same." "The whole system may collapse even if it was meant to be painted in three years time." "We would then take them to court".

Maintenance, Asset Replacement and Capital works

All the schools had their own ongoing maintenance issues to deal with. Having negotiated and signed the POD the boards were then responsible

for developing a long term maintenance programme (Principals' Implementation Task Force, 1990c). Two of the schools mentioned the difficulty of doing the job given the problem of costing so far into the future. Gamma and Delta both discussed this and decided to use consultants. The other schools may have done this as well but they did not discuss these matters while I was attending their meetings. The Ministry was working to a 10 year cycle when working out what proportion of the maintenance they would take responsibility for. So if the painting was to be done in five years they would cover half the cost. Having made a maintenance programme the boards then have to budget for money each year to cover the cost in 10 years' time. The Delta board considered waiting until the school was repainted to find out the costs of painting the school in order to estimate maintenance in 10 years' time. Comments included:

> Well I don't think that we should wait until the painting before we ask someone, a professional.
>
> [We need] a painter to come in, because he'll know what the conditions are going to be like after the painting, and also he could supervise the painting... it's all very well, lay people like us looking at it.
>
> Yes, spending a few hundred on somebody advising us could be money well spent.
>
> Cause at this stage we don't really know how much we should be putting aside in that reserve [long term maintenance reserve].
>
> No, exactly. That's right.
>
> And we could in fact be depriving the present generation of children by putting too much aside. (Delta, July 1991)

There was also a realisation by the Delta board that in order to achieve these maintenance goals they should be budgeting a set amount each year rather than seeing how much is left over at the end of each year and placing it in a reserve.

> You know we have to live within our limits. We can't end up ten years down the line, and they find that they've only got $40 000 in kitty to paint the building, and it's costing eighty. (Delta, July 1991)

Most of the boards would discuss maintenance at the meetings of the board, unlike Epsilon where this discussion would take place at the sub-

committee level. At each meeting a subcommittee report would be made to the board as to progress on maintenance and other minor capital works. The exception was the replacement for the photocopier which was a prominent matter in board discussions. A range of photocopiers were wheeled into one meeting so people could see what was on offer.

Earlier the chairperson had recommended that staff should decide which model to purchase. There were also servicing arrangements to consider and options of buying or hiring. The difficulty for the board was that the staff then made the recommendation that the most expensive model be bought which the board could not really afford or justify. A final decision was left to the finance sub-committee. This created a problem for the chairperson and the board whereby they told staff they could choose the photocopier and now they were going to tell them that the board could not afford it. A board member described it as the "staff wanted the Rolls Royce but we had to take the Morris Minor". The compromise was made possible by a refrigerator being found for the staff who wanted one for their staff room. At the time, the board did not think they would be able to afford one so it was a welcome surprise. This same board member made the comment that the board would not consult on such details now and the event reflected the difference between governance and management that the board at that time was still working on refining. Using principles of governance the board might have provided guidelines for management to work within. In this example that may have involved telling the staff how much they could spend.

Alpha board was wanting to repair its adventure playground after one of the board members reported that it was in some disrepair. Its present maintenance position was that "it just gets done periodically, there's no ongoing programme, and the maintenance of it just happens when someone notices, like yourself". This was seen as a possible project for the PTA. While there was some intention by the PTA to help with this the board paid for someone to assist the caretaker to do the 'upgrading of the adventure playground'. The PTA was able to contribute some of the funds for this through fundraising. Beta and Delta boards were also working on upgrading playgrounds, Beta with replacing concrete with grass and Delta with the development of a new adventure playground.

Delta board was undertaking a range of projects within the school. The boiler shed was undergoing conversion since the boiler had been removed. The board was investigating the possibility of a propagation house attached to the side of a present building which thus constituted minor capital works. This was a project that the board thought the school's PTA might want to support:

> It would be good for them to have something identifiable that they could in fact work towards and say 'Well we made this happen'. That would be good. (Delta, April 1991)

At the same time the board was considering what grants might be available for such a project. Using voluntary labour and the possibility of a grant would keep the costs to a minimum. However, future discussion indicated that no one in the PTA was willing or able to follow-up grant applications so this was done by the board.

Other types of minor capital development were the upgrading of the administration blocks at both Gamma and Delta. Another board decided to buy transport for itinerant teachers because the money allocated to the school for this purpose was not covering the cost and in the end it worked out cheaper to use that money to buy a vehicle.

One of the boards was in the process of funding its own capital works which created a number of decisions for the board in working through the process. While some money had been provided through a "one off" donation there was some difficulty in knowing if the work could be done and what was affordable. It was also necessary to gain the permission of the Ministry at every step of the way. The comment was made by a board member that the school could not gift the planned extension to the Ministry, that is do some building and then tell the Ministry later, as the Ministry wanted to approve all building, just in case the trustees put up a 'skyline' garage on the grounds. Even with the best intentions the Ministry has the last word on the architectural integrity of any additions to buildings.

One of the parents, because of their background, was in a position to draw up preliminary plans for the new room and was willing to do it at no cost to the school. When the plans had been drawn up and approved by the board they would then go to the Ministry for approval before more

detailed drawings would be drawn up and costings made. Then the approval process would begin again. This sort of project then required a certain amount of energy and financial cost with the possibility that plans may not be approved or their being insufficient finance to cover the planned cost.

There was some difficulty with deciding how big to make the planned work given the school had a growing roll and it was not always easy to anticipate the needs of the school in twenty years' time. Given that there appeared to be enough money to get things started, the next stage was for the board to commit themselves to having some plans made up.

> "I guess we've got to start. We can't keep thinking, well, we might go ahead, it might go ahead. We've got to start...and then...once we've accepted that then you can go and make all kinds of alterations." (Alpha, May 1991)

A later compromise was constructing the shell and paying for the interior as the money became available. The PTA was also seen to be in a position to consider raising money for the interior of the building. Even if not complete the construction would allow for teaching resources to be moved in, thus making available another classroom on a site, as a shortage of classroom space was anticipated.

There was some uncertainty as to whether the Ministry would fund ongoing maintenance after the resource room had been built given that another school had found itself in a position of having to fund its own caretaker for a block of classrooms that it built itself. Having sent in the plans for approval the Ministry was going to send an architect to the school to look at the proposed site at the school for which the Ministry would charge the school between $500-$1,000. This annoyed some people:

> It riles me to think we're providing something that they should have provided and should have funded and we've got money from the community to provide this asset for them on their behalf, you know, and their asking us to pay someone to come up and make sure that we're doing it properly! Right against the grain....I'm really quite angry about it but I guess if that's the only thing that we get hit with then we've come off fairly well.
>
> And the sooner we get it done the better.
>
> Before things change again. (Alpha, August 1991)

There were also administrative costs of working through the Christchurch office of the Ministry via toll calls.

In 1992 there was a picture of the new building with the subtitle "If the Ministry of Education won't do it, we will"[22]. The accompanying article described some of the issues the school had worked through. At this time the school had also applied for funding under the 'financial assistance scheme' whereby the Ministry would fund part of the costs for capital works. A later article indicated that only a few schools in Otago received money under the scheme and none of them were in Dunedin (Lawson, 1992a, p. 21). There was also a note in the article that the Ministry's manager of finance and support in Wellington had said

> "in general the Ministry would want to know schools could meet the immediate educational needs of their pupils before allowing them to spend operational funds on such things as new buildings".

This was a strange comment given that the school had justified the building because it could not meet the needs of learners without it. The reason given in the article for requiring the new building was the desire of the board to keep class sizes down.

Vandalism and Insurance

Vandalism was a concern for all the schools with Gamma giving it specific attention. The school is considered a high risk school for vandalism by the Ministry "due to its past record" and receives a vandalism grant to help cover the costs. Drinking fountains were broken, louvre windows were regularly being stolen from toilets and broken, buildings were broken into and fires lit.

The school already had security lights installed and while I was in attendance at meetings consideration was given to more lighting to resolve other particular 'trouble spots'. These included areas that were not exactly part of the school but felt to contribute to the problem. One of the small ironies of the lighting was that it could also suffer from vandalism

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[22]The article has not been cited in order to protect the anonymity of this particular school. This protocol will be repeated on other occasions when an article might identify a school.

and would also require some protection in the form of light guards. It was reported that other schools had achieved a measure of success with installing the lights, however "after receiving professional advice we stayed with what we had".

A security firm had been hired to respond to fire and burglar alarms should they go off. And a change was made to the caretaker's job description so that should the police or security firm make a call out to the school they would then contact the caretaker. The principal of Gamma would often use the community newspaper to bring people's attention to vandalism or thank them for their efforts:

> The principal and board of trustees wish to thank the residents in neighbouring properties to the school for their observance and actions in preventing and deterring vandalism.

Insurance did not cover low cost vandalism that would be less than the excess to repair. The vandalism grant provided by the Ministry was to cover the smaller costs. Insurance was for accidental breakages, theft and fire. Many of the schools had considered taking out insurance with a local insurance group rather than join the Ministry scheme which was more widely used around the rest of the country. However this was not without its problems.

> Most of Otago's schools are insured twice - a situation which could pose legal problems if claims are made for damage to or theft of equipment and other contents. The Ministry of Education and Otago schools are in a stalemate over contents insurance - a problem peculiar to schools in this region.
>
> The Ministry withheld $11 a pupil from each school's grant this year to pay for insurance. But after pressure from Otago schools many of which wanted to continue insuring with the Dunedin Insurance Bureau as they did last year, the Ministry backed down and agreed to refund the money to schools with alternative insurance deals....
>
> However, the Ministry has not refunded the money and has told schools they appear to be underinsured. it wants details of how the schools reached their insurance figures....
>
> The chairwoman of the School Trustees Association, Mrs Lynne Guy, said yesterday boards resented the Ministry's request for more information.

> Schools owned the contents of the buildings and it was up to boards to insure then as they saw fit. That insurance should have nothing to do with the Ministry she said (Lawson, 1991c, p. 10).

The Ministry's move in this area might be interpreted as suggesting they do not think that the boards were capable of taking responsibility for such a task. Another school principal was critical of the way the Ministry was handling the issue.

> The school principal...said at a board meeting last night the heavy-handed bureaucratic attempt at a takeover in the insurance area was continuing.
>
> Mr Richardson told members the Ministry had told him the board faced several penalties if it changed its mind at a later date and wanted to opt for the Ministry's insurance scheme.
>
> A letter was presented to the meeting from the Dunedin Insurance Bureau (the board's insurance agent) responding to Ministry claims that the latest assets valuation for most schools was too low, suggesting it be increased to the Ministry's figure.
>
> Mr Richardson said he believed schools were being "hijacked".
>
> "This attitude is part and parcel of the ills with *Tomorrow's Schools* and it's wrong," he said. (Logie, 1991, p.2)

This did not come out as an issue for the five schools in this study, although the issue occurred prior to my attendance at their meetings. Delta did receive a letter from the Ministry indicating "we appear to be under insured". The variation was due to an external assessors valuation being higher than other forms of assessment. The school is responsible for all the non fixed assets; that is, anything that the school is responsible for as part of its 10 year maintenance cycle. And so while this would not include carpets it was unclear whether this included the curtains. There was also a problem in relying on the asset register to provide insurance valuation given that it would not include items under the value of $250. The board also had differing values for indemnity and replacement and had received varying advice as to how they should arrive at a suitable figure. It was also unclear whether replacement value meant replacing an item with a new one or an equivalent valued second hand one. Previously people had come into the school to make valuations and there was now a

preference to have this done again by independent valuers. The treasurer on the board while supporting another valuation was keen to use the latest suggested value and increase the insurance within days. For him the cost of $1000 a year was "worth the peace of mind to make sure we are covered".

While the board had been discussing this matter over a number of meetings there had also been an attempt to get a reduction in premiums from the school's insurance company because a security alarm had been installed. But this was not forthcoming despite being told that they might expect a five per cent reduction. As one person put it "they don't actually give you any incentive". Another person thought that a premium reduction was not so important as the 'peace of mind' it offered. For others this was not enough as they were reducing the risk for the insurance company but there was nothing in return from the insurance company. For the treasurer's part he was satisfied that the cost could come out of money allocated for vandalism over a two year period. Without the possibility of a reduction the school went on to pay the cost of installing smoke monitors as part of its security system.

The board at this time lacked the information or a working knowledge of the insurance and evaluation system in order make an appropriate decision until another valuation had been made. Their impression of the Ministry was that their only concern was that the school was insured but that the value was the school's concern. "If you under insure, you carry the can". This is not, however, the way Dunstan High School board were interpreting the Ministry's concerns as expressed in the quote above from the Newspaper.

Summary

This chapter has described a range of issues that the boards were facing and how they were responding to them. Both finance and property were absorbing large amounts of trustee time and energy. Their ability to set up systems that would provide them useful information and keep them informed of how they were doing was going to be critical to forward planning. Some of the areas of finance and property will be referred to

again in the next chapter as they were to influence the boards' community relationships and educational objectives.

Chapter 5
Community Relationships and Educational Objectives

Community Relationships

One of the main principles of the Picot Report (Taskforce to Review Educational Administration, 1988) if not the most central was the idea that effective administration of education involves the decentralising of decision making and the establishment of a partnership between professionals in learning institutions and the community within which it is situated. This is reinforced in the *Tomorrow's Schools* Report which listed as its first two principles that:

> Institutions will be the basic "building block" of education administration, with control over their educational resources;

and

> The running of the institution will be a partnership between the professionals and the particular community in which the institution is located. The mechanism for such a partnership will be a board of trustees(Lange, 1988, p. 1).

The establishment of this partnership within the context of this reform started in 1989 with the election of Boards of Trustees and then continued with one of the board's first major tasks - the development of the school's charter (Hall & McGee, 1991).

Each of the boards had their own unique form of relationship established with their school community. When discussing consultation about policy, giving notification of meetings, raising parent interest on school matters or drawing on local resources each board was defining their community in terms of the relationships that the school had with other groups and individuals. The school community had already been formally identified as those who could vote for representation or be elected to the board of trustees. Thus principals, school staff, and parents and guardians (with citizenship), and students in secondary schools constituted the legislated community (*School Trustees Act* 1989). This idea of community usually

draws on our notion of the 'local' community as a geographical locality and within that there are many other groups and people that have relationships with the school and its board of trustees. Of particular importance is the state's representatives within the community as opposed to the more distant 'head office' state representatives. "From the end of 1992 the local Ministry has been directive. In 1993 three directives had to be overturned by the National Ministry" (principal from Beta school). This distinction usually became significant for those trustees, usually the principal or chairperson, who attempted to gain information or permission to act from the Ministry.

There was some confusion for Gamma board when they were asked to pay more fees to the School Trustees Association having already paid the 'required amount'. This was because the money paid was only covering the local STA fees and the board had yet to pay their national fees. And to complicate matters further there are three levels of the STA, the local, the regional and the national bodies. Trustees on other boards were seen to request clarification as to what level of the STA various correspondence originated from and for the Delta board they were unclear about how representation was made from level to level and how they had an input at the national level.

The boards all maintained a wide range of relationships with groups from the local community. These have taken many forms and a number of these will be elaborated on within this chapter.

Parent Teacher Association (PTA) - Home and School Association

All the schools in the study had a PTA except for Epsilon which was in the process of setting up a group to undertake a similar role to the PTA of the other schools. The main perceived role of the PTA by board members was that of fundraiser:

> But I think our money is spent and it probably wouldn't hurt for the PTA to be aware of that as well, that our coffers are going to be fairly dry (Alpha, August 1991).

As shown in the previous chapter the Delta trustees had assumed that the PTA might help in the raising of money for a propagation house and for Alpha trustees it was raising money for interior furnishings for a building

the board was commissioning. For both of these boards if fundraising activities were presented to the board then they would redirect them to the PTA:

> And she'll probably have to go to the PTA if she wants to fundraise with it (Alpha, May 1991)
>
> So will we pass that on to the PTA perhaps and they can look into it and decide whether it's going to be worthwhile fundraising? (Delta, April 1991).

This is a role that the PTA appeared to want:

> So they wanted to know if there was any project that they could aim for in the way of fundraising (Delta, April 1991).

One could follow the progress of the PTAs in fundraising efforts in the community paper under the section 'community news' where periodically the school boards and PTAs contribute material for columns that describe their activities:

> During the month the PTA presented the board of trustees with a cheque for $2500. This board appreciates the effort the PTA has made in raising this money. (Gamma)
>
> In November everybody will learn about dinosaurs, and visit the exhibition at the Otago Museum, thanks to fundraising by the Home and School Association. (Delta)
>
> Funds raised during the year have been put to good use. Three more computers have recently been purchased bringing the total to eight computers for the schools. (Delta)

Beta and Gamma boards discussed the problem of how money raised by the PTAs should be used[23]. This was not necessarily a power struggle over decision making but rather money donated for specific purposes attracted GST because it was interpreted as money paid to the board to buy a service. This was despite earlier indications that this was not the case in terms of donations from the PTA to boards (Lawson, 1990e, p. 11). For Gamma a decision was made to accept donations with a recommendation on how the money should be spent.

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[23]Delta referred to this as a problem, but without discussion, and Epsilon referred to this problem with donations from other groups.

For Beta's board the outcome was less clear. This was because the board had a strong commitment to fundraising through the establishment of its own fundraising subcommittee which according to the principal is "the biggest and most well run of the sub-committees as it has to raise $20 000". This was supported by the board developing its own fundraising policy. A group was running the PTA within the community and had made representation to the board to see if any of the board's current fundraising activities may be taken on by the PTA. This was supported by the principal to the extent that those activities where money was being raised for specific purposes would remain with the board sub-committee and other money would be transferred over to the PTA. This allowed two activities in particular, driven by the enthusiasm of one trustee, to remain with the sub-committee. This person was becoming visibly upset at the meeting when it appeared that the activities they supported might be transferred to another group.

At one meeting the chairperson suggested that some activities such as school fairs be joint activities but the principal considered the PTA was independent of the board and in particular operated its own set of accounts. The people within the PTA also wished to remain separate from the board. In the case of the school fair if it was a combined effort with the PTA they would wish to put the money raised through their books. A person representing the PTA (and also a school employee) at one meeting described the PTA as "an autonomous body so we, in consultation, would like to decide where it [money] would go". The board was still under the impression that money raised by the PTA for specific purposes would attract GST. This created the next problem for the board to resolve. With a commitment by the board to raising relatively large amounts of money for specific purposes as the needs arose and for this process to be overseen in a specific policy, the delegation of this decision-making to another group whose aims and desires would not necessarily coincide with the board was quite problematic. The thought that 12.5% (GST) might be lost if the money came in tagged for specific purposes did not help matters. This was not resolved but there was agreement that all money received from the PTA would be "returned to the school for the benefit of the children". The PTA, however, ended up without the responsibility for events and

activities where the money had a predetermined destination, These activities were left with the board's fundraising sub-committee.

There was not the communication between the Beta board and the Beta PTA as there was at the other schools in the study with the Beta board and PTA managing to arrange activities for the same day on one occasion - the board selling lamingtons and the PTA holding a garage sale. The Alpha, Gamma and Delta boards all sent a representative to PTA meetings, although during the time I was attending meetings at Gamma the representative resigned from that role. This person preferred that someone take over his role on a regular basis rather than 'share the responsibility'. There was a suggestion that maybe one of the PTA members might like to attend board meetings but the response from another member was that they "could glean information of no use or detrimental". The principal was quick to point out that board meetings are open.[24] The principal deferred the issue by saying he would 'sort things out'. The following meeting the principal said the PTA would like a summary of each board meeting sent to them if a board member could not be found to attend PTA meetings regularly.

Delta also had the same board member attend PTA meetings while the Alpha board rostered people but there was a tendency for people to forget when it was their turn. A new trustee of the Alpha enquired as to what the 'involvement' of the Board member was at PTA meetings. The response was:

> There are often things raised at PTA meetings that they'll ask a question about,...and we can give them an answer, straight off, simply because we know what's going on.
>
> The most important thing is to have the liaison between the two groups, so that any concerns can be brought by a person back to us instead of them having to write us a letter or ring up somebody after the meeting or whatever. It works very well, or it has done in the past, to have someone representing us. (Alpha, May 1991)

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[24]I wondered if this was for my benefit.

Both Delta and Gamma boards considered that people standing down from positions in the PTA may be potential prospects for co-option, in the case of Gamma, and board re-elections in the case of Delta.

There was no active PTA at Epsilon. The board of trustees instead had recently set up a separate sub-committee for fundraising. It was chaired by the chairperson of the board and it was his enthusiasm that kept it working. At the first meeting seven parents and two board members attended. The group was to be temporary and would disband once its goal to raise money for computers in the school was achieved. Later developments were to see the group enlarge to include ex-pupils, current and ex-teachers who had an interest in the school. By September a trust was formed to formalise the group. Money raised was to be put through the association and the board sub-committee was to be retained as a link with the trust. Thus fundraising was to become an ongoing affair with the intention that no one would have to 'start from scratch'. There was a short article in the local newspaper to highlight the trust's formation. Later follow-up revealed that the trust managed to raise a quarter of the money originally hoped for before the trust 'fizzled'. The board chairperson did not stand for re-election in 1992 and when he left the trust went into recess.

Other local community groups

All the schools had entered into relationships with other local groups that either tended to use the school facilities for a range of activities or provided a service to the school. Other relationships involved the school providing a service to the community or having contact with other groups to achieve mutual goals.

Alpha board had started a Maori parents' group in order to get input from the Maori community in policy development. This had minimal success until an open afternoon was held at school which allowed a wider group of Maori parents to show enthusiasm for future meetings.

There was a Catholic school near Alpha which had reached its roll limit and this had resulted in some of the non-Catholic families having to send their children to Alpha school instead. A marching team was using the grounds during the weekend which suited the board as it meant "the place

was being used" and so deter potential vandals. It was thought that this group might later use the school hall which could do, since they had negotiated the cost.

Epsilon had put a lot effort into meeting a charter goal to provide support to new settler families within the school community. This meant providing programmes for both children and parents in co-operation with other community groups. This required monetary support from the school and was listed as a statement of service performance in the annual financial report to the board AGM.

Gamma was in the process of hiring the city council to mow its lawns which saved the school $400 based on what it was costing the school to have the caretaker do it. The caretaker did not lose out in this case as he made up the money and time on other tasks. A school classroom was also used by a community group but they had continued to leave the room in a mess rather than leaving it as they had found it so they were asked to leave. The school also had a community representative of an immigrant group to help teach the children from new settler families.

Gamma was also in the process of negotiating with some preschools about the possible use of school grounds. One group was making use of a classroom sporadically and the board decided to put a kind of 'tenancy' agreement in place. This agreement indicated the period of time which could elapse without use before the board would ask if the group still wanted to use the room and also formalised the process whereby the board could evict the group if the classroom was needed for teaching purposes. The group having agreed to the proposal by the board then had to wait for the agreement to be approved by the Ministry of Education who actually owned the building.

The second preschool group was also using a room without rent and because this group was a formal one and seen as more long term the agreement included responsibility for maintenance, contributions to rates and electricity, and reference to a review process which allowed the board to reclaim the room if it needed the space. Like the other group's agreement this one also had to go to the Ministry of Education for approval.

Beta school was also made use of by community groups. During one meeting a request was made for the use of the hall only to find that it was regularly booked by organisations which included youth groups, dance groups and a local Asian community group. A women's group was contributing to the year of literacy by reading to the children at school. A local Rotary club had given money to the school to support families that might be having difficulty providing for their children at school. The school itself had run a lunch programme that had taken a range of forms- from making sandwiches to providing porridge.

At one meeting a problem with vandalism was discussed. The vandalism was supposedly done by a community group using the school facilities. Some of the youngest members had kicked holes in the nets of the soccer goals. The principal felt that the blame should fall on the supervisors. Any group using the facilities should leave them as they found them. The group was not using the facilities for the rest of the term and they would need to consider how they could replace the nets before the facilities would be made available to them again.

The board had considered having a pedestrian district put in place around the school to resolve some traffic problems being experienced. Previous attempts had failed because other changes were already being made to roading nearby. On the second attempt the school had been asked to survey the local community to find other views on the matter. On finding some opposition the idea 'died as the board was overwhelmed by other issues'.

Delta was another school where traffic problems outside the school occupied trustees' time in discussion. This is an interesting example of the board taking responsibility for the behaviour of parents and students who were outside the school but involved in a 'school' activity. The problems occurred when parents dropped off and picked up their children by car. The school had arranged for yellow lines to be painted outside the school to discourage parents from stopping outside the school gate when leaving their children. Besides being told by the Ministry of Transport that they could not have any more yellow lines painted around the school they had to be careful that they did not upset people living next to the school. The problem was now presented as a matter of parent and student education

to avoid traffic problems. The Ministry of Transport also implied that the board would be responsible for the education of parents in the first instance. It would appear that the placement of yellow lines in one place had "shifted the problem to another place". Notices about problems were to be placed in a newsletter and if necessary a traffic officer would come out occasionally to remind parents of their obligations. Children would also be encouraged to cross in groups across the road rather than in 'dribs and drabs'. At this particular point on the road where there were problems there was no pedestrian crossing and one would not be put in for other reasons.

In another matter of student safety outside the school the Delta board did not feel that it was in a position to intervene. There was deliberation over whether the board was in a position to make a policy about children being accompanied to school given there had been recent publicity about adults approaching children with malicious intent. However, it was not within the Board's jurisdiction to 'dictate' to parents but they could 'advise'. Also, a buddy system could be 'encouraged' for children who could not have adult accompaniment. Such advice would be in the form of a note in a newsletter home. It might be hypothesised that if there was a crisis, and advice had not been enough to prevent it, then the 'education of parents' would be considered as the next course of action as was the case in the example of the traffic outside the school. Alpha and Delta boards shared similar concerns about people in cars approaching their students. Their concern was to advise parents to be wary of such possibilities without alarming them unnecessarily. Three of the boards mentioned that their school was developing a 'Keeping Ourselves Safe' programme as part of the Health Syllabus in order to bring these things to the children's attention.

Delta had relationships with its local authorities in respect of the swimming pool on its grounds. The council owns the pool and charges the school the cost of its use. Delta then charges the council for daily maintenance of the pool of which the largest cost factor is the caretaker's hours. Delta also charges other schools who use the pool. The treasurer cited the pool as a good example of how difficult it is to cost out particular school activities. There is also the administration cost incurred by the secretary spending time arranging accounts and working with other

schools to timetable the pool's use. The whole process makes it difficult to know whether the school is better off financially 'leasing' the pool from the council as opposed to using a pool elsewhere as many other schools do.

Delta had also become involved with local issues surrounding the creation of a 'medium-security' psychiatric unit in a nearby suburb. This absorbed a large amount of board time at each meeting, learning of and discussing the latest development. The school had a representative on a local action group that was attempting to halt the developments. The Otago Area Health Board had also set up a liaison committee on which a number of local schools had representation. The board's first task was to find a suitable candidate; that is, they needed someone who was going to be quite assertive, to go onto the committee to "put the views of the parents and the community" (Delta, April 1991). The board was careful to consider the possible pros and cons of finding the right person to go onto a committee that might run for two years and absorb a lot of time. Board members had people in mind for the task but they thought that parents needed to be asked if they would like the opportunity to go onto the liaison committee. There was then the difficulty of turning down people deemed unsuitable after they had offered their services. The board agreed that it would be better to give the place on the committee to someone else in the community rather than a parent who might not be as suitable.

> The other thing...is it has to be somebody who is balanced about it, not going to get emotional, emotive about it because it's a very emotive subject and people are overstating the case... And I think too that they have to know that they are not actually representing themselves, they're actually there to represent the school and I think that's very important too. (Delta, April 1991)

One board member was cynical about membership on the liaison committee having any effect of the final outcome so that two years would seem like a waste of time. This hypothesis was proven correct when it was revealed that the committee was not going to allow for opposition to the new development but rather was a forum for keeping the community informed: "satisfying the community ... and helping the community adjust". So while the school's representative had done lots of work he would shortly resign his position.

> The demise of the committee is the fault of the way it's been chaired in that case, because as you say it's not the way it was set up.
>
> It's not what we had thought of.
>
> (Delta, June 1991)

Further community consultation had been arranged by the health board and the board of trustees decided that they would "encourage our parents to go to these meetings" to express dissatisfaction at the way the process and issues were being handled. Before this happened the Area Health Boards were dissolved by the government budget of 1991 with the health board being replaced by a commissioner. The liaison committee remained and community meetings were held (1991) but with little impact on the developments (Topham, 1991). As was implied above, liaison and discussion were to inform and help the community adjust rather than allow the community to change or halt planned events.

Consultation

The community relationships with boards of trustees was formalised in a process of consultation but as Delta board found out consultation, or in their case liaison, could mean different things. All the boards had been through the process of charter development and were now working on developing school policy to support their charters. The complexities of policy development will be described in the next section after describing the process of consultation that the boards developed in order to develop the policy.

In the *Governing Schools* (1989) definition:

> Consultation involves a process which establishes a genuine communication and there is a mutual sharing of viewpoints on a two-way basis....Consultation also needs to be appropriate to the cultural groups which exist in the school and community. A range of approaches is required to give all parents and caregivers an opportunity to share information and express their viewpoints. You should not rely on one single form of consultation (ch 4 p. 1).

Central to the idea of community consultation is the notion of partnership which:

> involves a meeting of equal parties who share information and viewpoints and reach decisions together. It does not mean that one merely responds to the other's decision (Department of Education, 1989, ch 4 p. 1).

The boards are required to establish this partnership through the process of consultation and is considered to be effective:

> when all partners: are kept regularly informed; are involved in the activities of the school; are involved in communication and discussion; share in making decisions; and accept mutual responsibility for decisions to act (Department of Education, 1989, ch 4 p. 1).

Alpha board had a range of structures set up to keep the local school community informed of what was happening as well as getting feedback from the community. Firstly there was an information booklet in the form of a prospectus. The board wanted to keep it simple enough so that they could both update information as it changed and produce it at school on the photocopier. If this meant it would not "be too flash" that was "okay" as the booklet was something

> to give out to parents, something we haven't had before .
>
> Sort of along the lines of a prospectus without being quite that formal.
>
> Right.
>
> So it'll be in kindergartens, in play centres, and it will be given to every new family at the school.
>
> (Alpha, April 1991)

The board also had a suggestion box in the school so that people would have an opportunity to provide anonymous feedback to the school. The idea was if there is a problem then people can send in suggestions or talk to someone, then these ideas can be incorporated into a series of options which can then be selected from. The intended outcome is that:

> If parents are aware that we are aware of the problem then they feel happier about coming and talking about it. (Alpha, April 1991)

And so while the intention was to give people an opportunity to provide feedback an event occurred revealing that the suggestion box was more than a thing but was part of a process.

> We have a letter that has come into our suggestion box, which leaves us with a problem. What do we do with it? [The group laughed in response]
>
> Is it the first letter you've had in the suggestion box?
>
> No, we have had others before, but we had one of our previous board members who was quite keen on the suggestion box, and she was quite happy to come along...and empty it and make sure that something was done about the suggestions that went into the suggestion box. We have no policy on what happens to suggestions that come in our suggestion box. We have a wonderful suggestion box.
>
> What are you suggesting?
>
> What I'm suggesting is, could someone please come up with a suggestion, as to what we do with the letters from our suggestion box.
>
> We can read them.
>
> Yes having read them what do we do. I'm sure that the person who wrote the letter and put it in the suggestion box would like a reply... or would like to at least know that...an acknowledgement will be presented to them.
>
> I think what you're trying to say is that, who will take over that lady's job.
>
> Weren't these to be answered through the newsletter?
>
> They were too.
>
> (Alpha, May 1991)

As a result of the letter being in the box too long another problem was that person had seen the principal in passing several times since.

> I'm sure that she has looked at me sideways a couple of times to see what I've done about it. And I don't want to bring it up cause it's not me....The suggestion isn't to me.
>
> (Alpha, May 1991)

The group decided that outcomes of letters in the suggestion box should be acknowledged in the newsletter but that some more immediate response should go to the individual if they have identified themselves. It was seen as important that the suggestion box did not get a bad reputation. Another thought was that if someone was to take over responsibility for the box that they talk to whoever makes a suggestion

and then be their advocate at the board meeting when the letter is discussed.

> I think it's great that people are writing in there, and we're not really responding particularly well at the moment, and I would hate to discourage people from doing that sort of thing.
>
> I really think that the person should also note which meeting its going to be discussed at so that they can, if they want to, come along and put their case.
>
> And they could get a verbal reply the next day on what happened -what the decision was. And they want to know how the decision went.
>
> (Alpha, May 1991)

The end result then is a process whereby the advocate acknowledges the receipt of the letter, discusses in more detail as to actually what the person would like said and invite them to the meeting. The advocate would also report back after the meeting as to the outcome if the letter writer did not attend. And they would also make sure that the outcome was acknowledged in the board newsletter. The agreed format for handling suggestions in the suggestion box would be outlined in the following newsletter so parents would know the process that would occur.

There were frequent references in Alpha board meetings to a newsletter put out by the trustees in conjunction with the PTA. The newsletter would include: notes on how the suggestion box is to work and answers to notes from the suggestion box were to be placed in the newsletter; such as the suggestion to revamp school lunches and the fund raiser to sell a booklet of ideas for school lunches; publicity for the July AGM; policy group developments such as which policies were being formulated and presenting parts of policies for people to get an idea of what was happening (the full drafts to be commented upon are made available on the notice board); requests to parents to let teachers know if they want their children inside during lunchtimes; notes to remind parents to make sure their children "are well kitted out for the cold"; and notice of appointments to the school. All the schools made use of newsletters to send information home but sometimes it was seen as the principal's newsletter rather than the boards.

Many of the schools made use of the twice weekly community newspaper, delivered to all households in Dunedin, to inform people of what had been happening in the school. Alpha, Gamma and Delta were the most frequent users of the suburban 'community news' that would focus on a different area each issue. However, often the column would not include information from the boards but accounts written by the students of activities within the school.

Alpha school also had a notice-board in place to leave material for people to view. This would include current policy being developed, a copy of the consultation policy placed permanently so that people would know what procedure was being followed in policy development, and PTA and board meeting dates. The board was to be moved from inside the administration foyer to an outside position within the school.

These modes of communication with the Alpha community are formalised systems that the board have available. They generally rely on someone in the community to take the initiative to write a letter for the suggestion box or go and read the information booklet or notice-board. In contrast when the boards had identified specific groups within the school community that they would want to contact for a range of reasons then a contact group would be developed, or an already existing one would be used, to communicate with that particular community. A particular group of individuals would then come to represent that whole sub-community - a form of reductionism. As mentioned earlier Alpha had a Maori parents group they had encouraged to be set up. When the Beta board was developing its music policy, and it wanted to contact non European ethnic sections represented in the school, it made contact with particular Samoan, Cambodian and Chinese groups within the community.

Another group identified by the Beta board, not by ethnicity this time, was that of 'new parents' who would be invited to the school as a group to be shown around and introduced to school personnel including trustees. There was found to be interest from other parents so it was opened to all who had an interest in the school and wanted to take the opportunity to come and "have a look". The principal found that something like this worked for a short period and allowed the board to make contact with the community but then interest would fade. And in the end "whatever is

done it must keep changing to maintain interest". The same was found for policy development.

She felt that it was "difficult to keep people focused on 'other' issues for long periods of time. Not that we fail but that it is the nature of consultation." Added to this was a feeling that consultation was not part of the Pakeha lifestyle, nor was it part of business practice. This was then used to explain the lack of consultation on the part of the Ministry of Education, an example given was the way the Ministry attempted to change Beta's POD unilaterally. Likewise the principal did not believe that the Education Review Office was concerned with how the school consulted its community on a range of issues and that if the board had done nothing, they would not have identified it as a problem during the schools review.

The Epsilon board had in its history an experience of consultation which had "gone wrong" and every effort was now made to avoid this type of conflict arising again. People identified the need to improve the public relations between the school and the community. The idea of a newsletter informing the community of what had been happening at the school was not enough. Subsequently a group was formed which eventually became a subcommittee which was called "community and public relations". The board had used surveys to gauge parent support for such things as religious (Christian) education (RE) and family grouping in school. A person had approached the board about the introduction of RE three years after a survey had indicated "the community did wish for a programme" (Epsilon, June 1991). There was also some reluctance to support RE given the school's strong commitment to multiculturalism. No one on the board felt they had the energy to work through another survey at that time. Another survey was conducted with parents saying "no" to RE, but there was then a question of how often should such surveys and resulting policy be reviewed. A decision was made to review policies such as RE and multiculturalism every five years in order to monitor changes in parent preferences.

At Epsilon, consultation on policy matters was the responsibility of the charter and policy sub-committee. It would appoint temporary working parties for each policy as they were developed. Each policy working party

had to say how it went about consulting people as part of coming up with a working draft and the charter sub-committee would decide whether further consultation was necessary before a draft was presented to the school community. Having been accepted the draft a copy would be printed and sent home to each parent household for a month as well as going to ethnic liaison contacts. After a month it would go back to the subcommittee with any responses. Having made changes a draft would go to the board for them to consider. The policy would then 'lie on the table' for a month for comment and then be accepted at the subsequent meeting if there were no major changes. The chairperson on Epsilon thought that the above process would have to change when presenting the Taha Maori, bicultural and multicultural policies. He felt it would be necessary to consult Maori 'on their turf'.

The practice of family grouping - putting students from a wider range of ages in the same class rather than in similar age classes - had highlighted a division within the school which was difficult to resolve. At a small school it is difficult to offer both options and because of parent support, based on a survey and meetings, family grouping was instigated. The teachers also had an interest in this as it would make an impact on their preferred style of teaching. Having had family grouping run for two years the board was considering whether an evaluation was necessary given that there was some dissension. Instead of running another survey, as had been done two years earlier giving parents two options to choose from, parents would be told which class their child would be placed in for the following year and given the option to contact the school if there were any 'hassles' with the proposed arrangement. The opportunity for parents to respond was seen as quite important but at the same time board members did not want the staff thinking that some of their choices were being taken out of their hands.

Part of the difficulty with family grouping according to board members at Alpha is that as parents they had only heard bad things about it. Without information to make decisions people were left to make decisions using unsubstantiated opinion. The chairperson felt that it would be necessary to provide

> ample opportunity for people to voice their opinions before any decision is made. Then it should resolve a lot of

> problems people have or have heard about this. You only hear the bad things when something like this happens.(Alpha, August 1991)

The principal mentioned that one couple had actually telephoned the school to ask if family grouping was available indicating that there are some people who saw it as important. For Alpha the issue arose because of the changing class sizes generated from a growing roll. At any one time there were usually classes made up of a combination of two teaching levels because there was not enough children at each level to make complete classrooms of about 30 students. Family grouping was usually seen as extending this to three or more teaching levels. This was something that rural schools had been doing for a very long time and it was accepted in this context because there was no alternative.

Board Policy and Educational Objectives

In this section I would like to describe further the way in which the boards were developing policy as follow up to their charter development. In the previous section comment has already been made as to how some of the boards consult their community when developing policy. This section will consider some of those policies specifically and how the boards went about resolving some of the issues inherent in them. There will also be a description of some of the other curriculum and classroom issues that came before the boards.

Policy

At Alpha the process of policy development was the responsibility of the policy sub-committee. They would draw up a list of policy to work on based on need; for example, in planning for school camps for the following year it was seen as useful to develop the policy for education outside the classroom so it would be in place before the students went camping. The sub-committee was working from a set of templates that they would then alter in consultation with teachers, parents and the board. In the case of the homework policy:

> We didn't have to make too many modifications to it because we thought that it's quite good. It gave enough scope for individual teachers to have their own ideas on what homework should be, and their own standards, so

> this policy will just serve as something to sort of say that we do have a policy and that there are certain things that encompass it. (Alpha, April 1991)

In looking over the policy there was a question of who is responsible for making sure the policy is followed. The policy indicated that the board is responsible but it was not obvious how they would know other than what was happening with their own children. The principal said he would put a management system in place to clarify what parents can expect in terms of homework. The task would appear in the principal's job description and performance agreement. When appraising the principal's performance he would then state what he did and present such things as information sent home as evidence of performing the task.

There was some discussion about the lack of interest shown by most parents in policy development. The policy sub-committee chairperson thought that maybe they were not providing enough information to stimulate people's interests. An alternative interpretation of a lack of interest is that people are happy with what the board is doing. It reflects a vote of confidence.

Interestingly ,the policy about making policy had just been finished and they recognised the irony of having not done that one first, given that it specifies the process by which the board should consult on its policy as it is being developed. (These events were repeated at Delta although at that stage they had not come up with a 'consultation policy'). However, the opportunity to develop policy has meant that many of the problems had already been considered by the time they came to write the policy.

> It's taking us a while to see what works best and so we've included a process on the back of that [page] just to show who that policy's been initiated by; the board of trustees, by the policy group, by the staff. The policy group takes them and gives notice to the school community in various ways- not just the newsletter or notice-board. There is opportunity for questions, comments and objections. If they occur then they go back to where the policy was originated. If it doesn't occur then the board of trustees will adopt the policy once they're satisfied that they can live with the thing. (Alpha,

The trustees would tend to evaluate the policy according to whether they think it is issue laden. Below are some examples of comments made in relation to policy which are italicised.

reporting to parents - people felt quite strongly about that one (Alpha)

religious education - which reared its ugly head again (Alpha) - divisive topic (Epsilon)

assessment - big thing in education, over done (Gamma)

role model - 'its the hardest' when comparing with EEO and sexual harassment - so biased to the feminist view(Gamma)

equal employment opportunities - a bit of a sop (Gamma)

green policy (recycling) - how far do you want to go (Beta)

equity policy - difficult to deal with (Delta)

curriculum policy - a bit unrealistic and a bit much to put upon parents (Delta)

Maori and Treaty of Waitangi policy - can create some difference of opinion (Delta)

In comparison, the policy that was seen as straight forward or matter of fact, such as much of the curriculum policy, was not followed by evaluative comments.

There were a range of issues for trustees to consider. One member of the Epsilon board asked "how do we get on if people don't want to accept policy introduced after they have been employed?" (Epsilon, July 1991) The principal's response was to say that if people are not following policy produced for education then they are "not employable" in schools. This did not respond to the question in terms of how the board might remove someone who was not employable and I did not see any of the boards work through this issue in practice.

Consulting the community on developing policy was seen as a difficult task for the Beta principal. "Any and every means had been tried". The most successful occasions are those which she describes as 'cultural ones'- when ethnic groups other than Europeans are involved. Whatever the difficulty in gaining community input the principal felt that the school's policies were forward thinking and innovative because of their ability to recognise the individuality of students and their recognition of the various groups in the community.

For Delta, policy development was done by setting up temporary sub-committees made up of board members and parents who had a particular interest in that policy. Parents are advised by newsletter which policies are about to be developed and asked to contact the school office if they want to be involved. In the main, apathy was considered to characterise most parents' responses to policy but there was a concern to be prepared for some occasions when they deal with policy in which more parents may show an interest. There was also a question of whether the board should give them all an opportunity to be involved which tends to 'prolong the process' and increase the chances of differences in opinion arising within a group:

> You could always say, ring people and say 'look, thanks but we really only need two or, you know, two or three people and we've had ten offers so we ... if you don't mind we'll keep you informed but won't use you on this occasion'. If that really happened.
>
> We've got to do what is right.
>
> I think we are obliged to tell parents what's being done, and give them the opportunity to be involved. (Delta, July 1991)

It was difficult to gain an inside view as to policy issues at Epsilon because most of the work in development is done through the relevant sub-committees or staff and then forwarded to a permanent sub-committee who would refine the policy and table them to the board for approval and they would generally be passed with little comment. At the same time the chairperson of the sub-committee had asked for other board members to become involved in the subcommittee but no one had been forthcoming.

In contrast Gamma did not have a specific sub-committee and much of the discussion of policy was carried out in board meetings. Some of the issues this board worked through was wanting to avoid open ended commitments that the board may not be able to meet. An example would be one policy that stated 'it will encourage participation in music' to which was added 'subject to budget'. This was supported and it was suggested that this was an 'unwritten but accepted policy' that everything is subject to budget. Other ways of avoiding over commitment of the board was to use 'could' rather than 'should' to change obligations. There were also difficulties with policy not being inclusive enough - to eliminate 'children

slipping through the cracks' the phrase 'every child will reach their potential' - or it was over inclusive - 'children from a range of multicultural backgrounds which include...', what happens when the list changes? Where possible gender differences were to be eliminated by replacing boys and girls with children and men and women with people. There was agreement that these changes amounted to just playing with words to meet requirements of accountability but at the same time the policies needed to be workable; that is, meet the requirements and avoid getting caught up in issues.

The principal at Gamma school thought the 'heat had gone off' policy development from the Ministry and so there was no need to rush. Having developed policy it was available for the community to view but there was no need to advertise them.

In describing the equal employment opportunities' policy the principal of Gamma described the Ministries' position as "if all things are equal then give it to a woman". While it was acknowledged that some do not agree with this approach the solution lay in the definition whereby the best person for the job was the person the board chooses.

The 'role model' policy was explained as an attempt to get more women into positions of responsibility but it was felt that it can conflict with non-Pakeha cultural values. As well the Ministry position did not focus on the problem of many children going through primary school without a male model as teacher. The relevance of this policy was elusive for some and the time being spent on such things was an annoyance. This was expressed by one trustee as "every little thing the school does has to be written in policy, everything".

For one trustee in the Delta board there was a problem of not knowing what to put in the policies that seemed so abstract "The only thing about equity is it's, I mean... how do you draw a policy up on it? I mean it's a self defining statement it's.. I don't see how" (Delta, July 1991). The solution for this board was to work on the policies "that seem to be important". The principal had said that the idea of policy is that it

> should help people in the school to solve problems ... if something happens, right, what do we do? Don't know. Right, let's see what the policy says. (Delta, July 1991)

Thus important policies were those that provide guidelines to resolve current or potential problems.

> Right...guidelines, right... that we need, guidelines in those areas. So we'd sit down and say, 'now what guidelines do we want?' And we write as many guidelines as we think is appropriate now, and if it's not enough we go back ... at some later date and then, say 'no, well we need a little more guidance here', so we add to them, or subtract from them depending on what, you know, how they pan out. (Delta, July 1991)

The connections between the charter and national guidelines, and school programmes within school operations is to be made by the many policies each school develops (Department of Education, 1989). None of the boards seemed to conceptualise the policies in this context when discussing policies at board meetings. This may account for some of the trustees having difficulty in locating policies within their own sphere of activity. If anything the policies would appear to be a commitment between the board, teachers and other parents about how things are to be done in school. Some policies are seen as more important than others if they clarify some conflict within the local community or inform parents of what to expect in terms of school practice, as might be the case with religious education at Epsilon or homework at Alpha. Other policy is developed because someone else, such as the Ministry, has said the school has to have a policy on some particular matter even though it may be unclear to the trustees why the policy should be there- as in the case of equity at Delta. Curriculum policy was seen as separate again because it was deemed to be the domain of teachers.

Curriculum Framework

Even though the trustees would be expected by ERO to have an understanding of the curriculum there was a tendency for the trustees to think that the development of curriculum policy was the responsibility of the teaching staff under the leadership of the principal. This is supported by the policies in these areas being drafted by the staff before going to boards or sub-committees for approval. This point was demonstrated when trustees discussed a draft curriculum which was released in the

middle of 1991[25]. It was sent to all school boards asking them to consult with their community before submitting a response. A response booklet was included with a series of questions to guide the consultation.

For the Delta trustees there was a lack of understanding as to how the curriculum related to the board.

> I thought the curriculum was Patrick's area [The principal]. The set curriculum. Is this the set curriculum? And this is all the teachers have to work off? (Delta, July 1990)

The principal explained that "it's sort of the philosophy behind it really, it's not the actual nitty gritty of it." Another member thought that...

> the government should not impose their will in the curriculum area. That should be left to... other people. That should be left to parents and teachers in the main. (Delta, July 1991)

The uncertainty in this area was further reflected in a request from a board member to have a teacher along to the community meeting to clarify points that may not be understood. Staff had been asked to fill in their own response booklet leaving parents to work separately. It was thought that this was a deliberate ploy which assumed that "teachers would sway parents into the current ways of thinking" on curriculum matters. It was a small group of parents without Delta teachers present that worked on the document. It should be noted that, during the board meeting when this document was discussed, the principal and staff representative took the opportunity to outline their thinking on the material and alert trustees to the need to read between the lines when filling out the response booklet.

The response booklet asked people to consider what resources would be needed to facilitate implementation of a national curriculum. Board members found it strange that they should be asked to recommend resources when they did not know specifically what programmes the teachers were running.

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[25]The document was released by the Minister of Education, Lockwood Smith, newly appointed after a change in government at the end of 1990, released *The National Curriculum of New Zealand: a discussion document* (Ministry of Education, 1991).

The Alpha board's response to the document was very similar to Delta's but with a different outcome. "It is probably, I think, of more value to the teachers than to us" (Alpha, July 1991). There was then a recounting of how people had been involved in the 1986-87 review instigated by an earlier Minister of Education.

> Yeah I think we should be aware, these things just seem to be brought upon us and I think a reaction of a lot of people now is 'I've already been involved in curriculum reviews. Why even bother?'
>
> Yeah, well I can understand that. Change of government, change of policy. People get sick of it after a while. (Alpha, July 1991)

This was followed by a criticism of how much it cost to publish such a document and the number of teacher aide hours it would have paid for, something that was of particular concern to the Alpha board. The response booklet was not sent back by the board.

At Beta board the discussion document was minuted as received but there was no discussion at the meeting. The principal at Gamma introduced the document as something that might be of interest but only one person indicated they wanted to have a look at it.

Teacher - Student Ratios and Class Sizes

The roll was of continuing concern to boards especially those who had suffered from falling rolls as Epsilon had done. There were also planning implications for schools such as Alpha in terms of finding places to accommodate the students. Within this was a concern not to let junior classes grow too big over a year. Parents were already expressing concern about high ratios of teacher to pupils in the junior school in April.

> I think a lot of parents feel that there's probably something we can do as a Board of Trustees, or whatever, and they don't really understand how we have our hands tied by the economy apart from the law and I feel a quick letter to send home [the message]... (Alpha, April 1991)

However, a board member added a note of caution:

> I think we have to be very careful that we don't frighten them by saying that this is a situation that's out of control, and we can't do anything about it, and by national standards, 26 in a class is not high I think. It's not what we

> would like, but there's not a lot that we can do about it. (Alpha, April 1991)

The Delta principal had a similar concern and this had been heightened by speculation that the 'vote education' would be reduced and this would cause larger class sizes. This school already had an 'above establishment position' filled by a first year teacher. The present ratio was 1 to 22.45 and would have been 1 to 28.5 without the new teacher. The staff representative described how each new child in a class reduces the amount of individual attention each child receives and the number of times each child gets to interact with the teacher. There was a rumour that the Ministry might move to a ratio of 1:34, which was described as "return to the past". This did not eventuate as predicted but as a result of the budget the above establishment teacher was not to be given a second year at the school unless she gains a permanent position. It had been understood that first year teachers who were above establishment would be funded for two years in a school. The board had thought they had some documentation to hold the Ministry to this understanding but there was nothing that formally committed the Ministry to this.

> Teachers 'ripped off' over jobs. A St Clair Primary School Teacher, Mr Mark Bunting, feels 'pretty ripped off' at the news that he along with 20 other Otago teachers, will lose his job this year....The Government has scrapped a scheme which guaranteed the teachers two years of employment after they graduated from colleges of education....The situation was made worse by the budget's scrapping of the development of a ratio of 1 teacher to 20 pupils in primary schools. That scheme had created new jobs each year (Lawson, 1991g, p. 12).

Two weeks later another newspaper report indicated that the Government had 'backtracked' on its earlier decision. The acting Minister of Education was cited as attributing

> the "change of heart" to 'legal responsibilities' which had come to light since the budget. In giving the teachers jobs and promising them two years employment the government had effectively entered a contract with them (Lawson, 1991h, p. 4).

The teacher quoted in the first article was reported in the second as being 'rapt' at the new and surprised that 'we were able to sway the ministry'.

The acting Minister said the decision was made after talking with the teacher union.[26]

As new pupils joined the roll the school could apply for more teaching hours from the Ministry but that sometimes took too long to arrange; for example, it took two and a half months for the Alpha board to get an extra 10 hours funded. At that time it was not possible to use money from the operational grant to pay for teaching hours but it was possible to use it to employ teacher aides. Added to the difficulty was the reduction of hours to assist children with disabilities in the classrooms which added to the workload of teachers in full classrooms.

> Last year we used to be able to get discretionary [hours] for about four or five of our pupils. Last year I put in for at least five, I only got this seven hours for one, and nothing for any of the others. This is where they've really knocked it back and I think that discretionary might be going at the beginning of the next year, unless the pupils are grade one which probably means the ones in attached units. (Alpha, July 1991)

There were similar sentiments expressed at the Delta board meetings:

> What it means in the final outcome again is that those minutes [of individual attention] up there will just go out the window, because you'll spend you know, probably 60 or 70% of your time with the children who are disrupting.... with one or two. (Delta, June 1991)

A trustee of Alpha board asked if the school could turn pupils away but was advised that the option of 'closing the roll' can only be taken when there was no space left. It would be a while before that would eventuate and even then it would not resolve the issue of class numbers. The Delta board felt it would be important to encourage parents to write letters of concern to the Minister of Education and the School Trustees Association.

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[26]I was not at the Delta board meeting to follow their response to this news.

Summary

This chapter demonstrates the concern that boards have for local issues and how they make sense of them in the light of the demands they face as board members. There are attempts to develop the partnership with the community at the same time as control it if necessary. At the same time a struggle with the Ministry of Education and the Government was evident in discussion about policy as boards attempted to bring about the school practice they desire.

Chapter 6

Personnel Management and Governance

Personnel Management

> The changes introduced in Tomorrow's Schools established the Board of Trustees as the employers of all the staff at their school, teaching and non-teaching. As such, the Board has the final responsibility for appointing staff, providing for their ongoing training and development, ensuring they are treated fairly and justly, rewarding staff, and, should the need arise, disciplining or dismissing them. However, the Board will not be involved in all the day to day aspects of staff management; most of this will be delegated to the principal, who in this respect will function as the school's personnel manager. (Principals' Implementation Taskforce, 1990b, p. 1)

Thus trustees, while volunteers, had taken on the role of employer which might be expected to change the parent-teacher relationship. This new responsibility, however, was heavily constrained by legislative requirements, industrial awards and the notions behind the term "good employer" which is outlined in the *State Sector Act* 1988 (Department of Education, 1989).

A number of the schools in the study were working through similar issues in terms of personnel. As previously noted in chapter 5 a number of schools were considering the costs of non-teaching staff within their budgets and for the Epsilon Board this was even more critical as they were maintaining a school which was larger than the roll numbers for which they were being funded.

The teacher - student ratio and its relationship to roll size was mentioned in the previous chapter. One way a school could control the level of staffing was through the use of teacher aides. A trustee on the Alpha board posed the question of whether the school was able to employ teacher aides and pay for them out of its operational grant without Ministry permission. This could be done and to some extent the school was doing that already. It would seem that the number of hours allocated was done on the basis of what was happening prior to the introduction of

boards. It was now possible for the school to identify priorities and make use of the teacher aide's hours to match. There was some scepticism about whether the money was actually being placed in the school's operational grant for teacher aides:

> The fact that we did have extra teaching hours last year that we applied for and got through Goff [Minister of Education] has been good...but the bad thing is that some of that money, the teacher aide's money, we should have had in the first place and...I don't think personally they did put it into our fund, I think it just went and they said 'oh it's in there, we calculated that when we did the calculations'. (Alpha, July 1991)

The board has to take it on trust that it has been given money in its operational grant for things such as teacher aides but it is not told how much. This becomes obvious for the children with special needs where it is up to the school to decide how much money has been allocated to it because a child has a disability. Likewise as Alpha's roll increases it is not given more hours for clerical support.

Non teaching staff

As has been mentioned previously a number of the schools had taken the opportunity to employ people within the range of schemes supported by the New Zealand Employment Service. The boards generally refer to these people as 'Taskforce' or 'Restart' workers. This was a relatively cheap way to get certain tasks done that would otherwise take a lot longer to complete if done by volunteers or working bees. Taking on such workers was usually done on the basis of whether there was a task that was considered in need of doing. When the boards found people they thought were good workers there was a tendency to want to support them in further work but funding was generally critical in this matter as was the difficulty in knowing how long one can keep a person temporarily employed:

> It all boils down to funds doesn't really?
>
> Yes.
>
> Is that cruel to sort of keep her on for another couple of months or three months or.. you know, we'd have to have a definite time wouldn't we?
>
> Yes that's right, there'd have to be a definite finishing time.
>
> (Delta, July 1991)

Epsilon was in a similar position using Taskforce and Restart workers to develop the playground and make curriculum resources. Some of the arrangements with these workers did not always pay off for the school. On one scheme the workers were paid $5 above the unemployment benefit for three days work. The principal felt that the time to set up for these workers as well as the extra supervision they required was not worth it. In another scheme the value of the workers varied. "You still get some bad ones and some very good ones" (Beta principal).

There was also a general worker employed at the school who was involved with a range of work. The school commitment to this position was questioned when it was found that money was not going to be readily available to maintain it. A commitment was made until Christmas at which time it was to be reviewed.

Delta board found itself in the position of finding a replacement for a part-time cleaner who had resigned. They did not have a lot of time to find a replacement and some thought it might be quicker to ask those they knew who might be interested. However, it might not appear fair to those who did not get the opportunity to apply and it was felt that a number of people were looking for such work. While it might generate a lot of applications it would give all those who wanted to the opportunity to apply and this would justify the extra effort involved in assessing a larger number of applications.

As mentioned previously Gamma board had worked through the caretaker's first job description in conjunction with altering his responsibilities in order to reduce grass cutting costs. In the past the caretaker received extra money for the task because of the allowances which were tied to the job in his award. This payment was no longer made to the caretaker but this loss was compensated for by making him responsible for call outs to the school when the security firm needs someone to contact. It appeared a matter of coincidence that the two issues arose at the same time for the board.

Staff development

Gamma board had been working on a staff development policy. This was something that the chairperson said the board of trustees should

encourage. The policy specified amounts that the board would be willing to subsidise specific types of development depending on whether it was voluntary or the teacher had been nominated. There was difficulty in budgeting an amount for this when people do not usually know that far ahead what kind of development they will be involved in. The board had hoped to budget by approving all larger expenditures in the previous year but most of the teachers would not know about their staff development commitments until about February or March of the same year.

Alpha and Epsilon boards were regularly informed of the teacher development that staff were currently involved in, during the principals' report to the board meetings. In both cases the teachers were involved in programmes run by the local college of education. Teachers at Alpha school had anticipated taking part in a maths programme before they decided it would be taking on too much given that they were already involved with other teacher development programmes.

The Epsilon board did not have funds available for teacher development in their 1991 budget so they made a deliberate effort to make use of all programmes offered by the college of education which had lower or minimal costs. A difficulty arose, however, when the principal made a request to attend a principals' conference in order to "seek professional contact and support". The group agreed in principle that the principal should attend and that time away from school would be allowed, but there was some difficulty in deciding how much of the cost the school should cover. The BoT had recently been spending time on drawing up a performance agreement for the principal which supported such professional development. A motion to cover the cost of travel and registration to the conference was passed by a majority vote although it was never established where the money would come from during the meeting. The treasurer stated that "this [referring to costs incurred in professional development] is going to be a problem in the future". In the end the principal covered the costs of attendance. In her report back to the board after the conference the principal "there's some really good things going on here [at Epsilon school]".

Later another staff member requested contributions to costs at a conference. The request was for a contribution for registration and as it

was during the school holidays there would be no need to find money for teacher release from the classroom. During the meeting there was a commitment made to finding the funds but in the end the staff member paid for himself. At the AGM the principal stated that despite the lack of money a large amount of professional development had taken place. This was done by working with advisory staff in the various curriculum areas, attending seminars as they came up and by "staff putting money where their mouths are". The principal's report presented at BoT meetings often included a section on professional development activities/events occurring that month that would often list half a dozen or more items.

Delta also had teachers making requests to the board for support to attend conferences. The board provided the cost of registration and transport on one occasion with the chairperson making the comment that "we haven't really dipped into it very much". One of the problems for the Delta principal was arranging a teacher only day. There was particular material to be covered but the problem was that the school was required to be open so many days in the year and taking a day out of that number would mean that the school would not reach that number. It appeared that the Ministry would:

> look the other way.
>
> It's just an in-house thing really...don't close the school... But just tell the parents not to send their kids. (Delta, June 1991)

Other schools had done this and they were waiting to see the consequences. The final decision was left to the principal..."Well Patrick, I think we'll leave it in your hands. I mean you know how to run the school better than we do." For the following year the principal was keen to start the school year early "so you've got those up your sleeve...You've got two spare days to play around with during the year" (Delta, August 1991).

Staff leave

On a number of occasions the boards would be requested to authorise leave for staff. This was always granted. At a Delta board meeting the staff representative asked the board for leave over the last half of the year when he would be seconded as a facilitator on a local college of education school development programme. This particular staff member would be

providing staff development to other teachers. This particular programme involved helping schools improve their curriculum provision to meet specific charter objectives. The arrangement was that the college of education would pay for a relieving staff member to take the seconded staff member's place. The staff member would continue to be paid by the school as though he had never left and the school would be paid money to find a relieving teacher. The onus for finding a replacement would be on the school and in this case a person currently employed as an acting principal had been approached. It was emphasised that the staff member picks up valuable skills which they bring back with them when they return. There was also an acknowledgement that there would be certain parts of the school's regular programme that this particular teacher would not be able to contribute to, such as the school camps for senior students:

> It's really a balance of, I mean, clearly we are going to lose your personal abilities in the school for the rest of the year....And I don't think any of us here thinks that that's a good idea. It's a question of whether that is offset, more than offset by the ah, well maybe not the direct advantages to the school, but the advantages to you personally, what you think it's going to do for you. As I mean, basically, as a board we know it's in our power to, say 'yes you can go' or 'no you can't'...and I presume, you'd say that we would decide that. (Delta, June 1991)

This comment reflects the growing realisation that what was in the best interests of the school may not be in the best interest of the staff member and vice versa. In the end the board agreed (reluctantly according to the chairperson) to release the staff member contingent upon a replacement being found. Having been on the phone to a potential replacement during the meeting the principal was optimistic that the person would be able to fill in for the teacher requesting leave. The reliever's experience at camps was seen as a bonus in terms of the camps that would be coming up in the third term. While the person was able to fill in for the third term it still left 5-6 weeks of the second term to consider since the request for leave was for immediate release. A board member asked if relieving deputy principals were available to which the principal recalled how

> they're a rare animal. You see the system, the... a great big void has been left. Previously you rang up the Education Board, and you'd say 'right, have you got somebody to fill this...post?' But there is nobody to ring. (Delta, June 1991)

It was pointed out that the local service centre did have a listing which might prove useful. It was left to the staff representative and principal to work out the replacement details.

Having approved two requests for leave at the previous meeting and now another, the principal later referred to the increasing number of occasions when staff would request leave for short periods and forecast that

> sometime in the future... where perhaps it might get a wee bit out of hand,...we'll need to know what the limitations are, things like that. (Delta, June 1991)

Someone thought that such things would be laid out in the award but it seemed that special leave was not. Bereavement leave, sick leave etc. are covered but not special cases. It was suggested that some guidelines would be useful. The impression was that it would make it easier for the principal to decide when it might be appropriate to say 'yes' and 'no' to requests.

After this item, but during the same meeting, an unofficial request was made for maternal leave for the third term. The principal had already found a replacement who would be available. This request was to be confirmed in writing and the board approved the principal's choice of relieving teacher.

One of the administrative problems that the Ministry had not anticipated was that if staff take short term unpaid leave of one or two days then that money had to be deducted from that staff member's salary and paid to the school in order to cover the reliever.

The Gamma board was also asked to approve two requests for unpaid leave in the same meeting. The chairperson initiated discussion on these requests by starting with the phrase "Let's address these problems". The principal supported both requests by saying that granting one of the requests would be a gesture of goodwill to the longest serving member of staff and the second request was presented as a trip to Asia, organised before the staff member's appointment, which would be of educational value for the teacher and of benefit to the school given the numbers of new settler children on the roll. The chairperson moved that both requests be accepted.

Staff appraisal

There has already been reference to the monitoring of policy by the inclusion of specific tasks in the Alpha principal's job description and performance agreement. Over a number of months the Epsilon Board had been developing a performance agreement for the principal. It came up for discussion at one meeting when the principal was absent[27]. There was general agreement with the content of the document but there were decisions to be made as to how often it would be reviewed, how the appraisal is to be carried out and by whom and what sort of reporting is to be used. There was some support for the chairperson to do the review although he was unhappy with making such "professional judgements". The solution was for him to co-opt others to form a team. This was to be made up of the policy sub-committee chairperson and one other board member. It was pointed out that once the agreement is signed it becomes a public document . This was because it is not the same as an employment contract but more like a condition of employment.

Above establishment first year teachers

In chapter 5 there was reference to rumoured staffing cuts in education that could lead to increased teacher - student ratios. One of the results of the 1991 government budget was that the first year teachers who were above establishment were not to be given a second year at the school unless they gained a permanent position. It had been understood that first year teachers who were above establishment would be funded for two years in a school:

> Teachers 'ripped off' over jobs. A St Clair Primary School Teacher, Mr Mark Bunting, feels 'pretty ripped off' at the news that he along with 20 other Otago teachers, will lose his job this year....The Government has scrapped a scheme which guaranteed the teachers two years of employment after they graduated from colleges of education....The situation was made worse by the budget's scrapping of the development of a ratio of one teacher to 20 pupils in primary schools. That scheme had created new jobs each year. (Lawson, 1991g, p. 12)

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[27]I could not say whether this absence was planned or whether the board took the opportunity when it arose to discuss the topic when the principal was to be absent.

The Delta board had thought they had some documentation to hold the Ministry to this understanding but it was an expectation only. Even the job description did not include a reference to two years. Teachers require two years after training in order to complete the requirements for teacher registration:

> The NZEI believes that if we took her on in good faith thinking that we were going to be paid to employ her for two years, then we have reason to complain. (Delta, August 1991)

Another person referred to the moral obligation that the government had to keep these people on but: "That doesn't seem to hold much water...moral obligation". The principal thought it was likely that the first year teacher may be able to get a permanent position within the school by the end of the year. This was dependent on finding out what the estimated staffing levels would be for the school which would not come out until one month later in September.

Two weeks after the first report above captioned *Teachers 'ripped off' over jobs* , another newspaper report indicated that the Government had 'backtracked' on its earlier decision. The acting Minister of Education was cited as attributing

> the "change of gear to 'legal responsibilities' which had come to light since the budget. In giving the teachers jobs and promising them two years employment the government had effectively entered a contract with them. (Lawson, 1991h, p. 4)

The teacher, quoted in the first article, was reported in the second as being 'rapt' at the news and surprised that 'we were able to sway the Ministry'. The acting Minister said the decision was made after talking with the teacher union.[28]

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[28] I was not at the Delta board meeting to follow their response to this news.

Teacher registration

Registration was another issue. With the removal of the requirement that teachers had to be registered with the legislated registration board each school would have to decide what position they would take in terms of employing teachers. One Delta trustee suggested that a letter be written to the minister saying they did not support the removal of such a requirement. While some schools do face a shortage of trained teachers there already was in place a procedure by which teachers and schools could ask for exemption in special cases. A letter was written to the Minister of Education with copies going to the STA, NZEI, opposition spokesperson for education and local member of parliament.

The Alpha board also referred to the changes. The principal stated:

> My initial reaction is that you would be taking quite a chance on employing teachers who were not registered and that's a perfectly good safeguard for any board of trustees- to only appoint registered staff. I don't think there's any panic out there at this stage ... I hope. Some students may see that quite differently, some people here may see it differently, this is my opinion. (Alpha, August 1991)

No differing opinions were expressed and it was mentioned how some schools were considering the placement of a statement in their charter that they will only employ registered teachers.

Governance

Six months after the boards officially took over responsibility for their schools the *Lough Report* was released which reviewed the many changes in educational administration and made recommendations to the Minister of Education as to what further improvements were necessary (Education Reform Implementation Process Team, 1990). The review team felt that "the focus of educational reform during the next six months needs to build on and consolidate the progress made to date" (p. 16). In order to do this 'urgent attention' was required to resolve an 'overriding concern' and two 'specific problems'.

The 'overriding concern' was about the "ability of the schools to manage their new administrative tasks effectively" (p. 16). The two 'specific problems' related to the "additional challenge to schools implied by the delegation of responsibility for teacher salaries later this year" (p. 16) and

finding "the appropriate role for each individual who fills a position of responsibility under the reforms" (p. 17). In an effort to address the 'overriding concern' the Principals' Implementation Taskforce was set up and, six months after the Lough Report, produced five booklets (Principals' Implementation Taskforce, 1990). The booklets, which were a series of how to guides, were produced on the basis that "administrative systems appear to be under pressure" (p.17). This had resulted from difficulties schools had in getting 'consistent' policy guidance from the Ministry of Education; an 'absence' of operational objectives and planning, monitoring, reporting; and the anticipated problem of trustee succession.

The first of the specific problems relates to the government's desire to implement bulk funding. Discussion below will focus on the views of the boards' in this study. The second specific problem is role conflict and relates to the distinction boards were required to make in terms of governance and management and the roles of the board of trustees, chairpersons, principals and administrative officers in each school. None of the schools in the present study had a separate administrative officer but rather this role was combined with the principals' role.

Bulk Funding

This was the first specific area that the *Lough Report* (Education Reform Implementation Process Team, 1990) identified as requiring attention. The *Picot Report* (Taskforce to Review Educational Administration, 1988) had anticipated that school boards would be given control over the teaching grants allocated to each school. Since then there has been ongoing debate as to whether or how bulk funding should be implemented. During 1991 the Minister of Education released the Second Report on the Bulk Funding of Teacher Salaries (Ministry of Education, 1991) with the government budget of that year. The second report was to follow up of the feasibility of a number of models for bulk funding outlined in a report issued earlier in January 1991. It recommended the introduction of bulk funding in the form of a trial which would take account of "the present industrial climate" and specified that:

> Decisions about the timing and pace of the introduction of the bulk funding of teacher salaries need to take into account the current industrial climate in the education sector. (Ministry of Education, 1991, p. 48)

In April 1991 the Gamma principal told the board that Bulk Funding was "on hold" so it would not be implemented in 1991 while the Minister "chews over the options" in response to the first report on bulk funding. The principal still felt that it needed to be discussed at some later stage.

Alpha board was also informed that any move to implement the bulk funding of teachers' salaries had been stopped but there was no indication for how long and some of the board members thought the halt in plans was possibly the result of political manoeuvring:

> He [the Minister of Education] may have seen that next year there's a board of trustee election so he wouldn't do it then because he wants people to sit for the board of trustees. Then the year after he's got his own elections. So I think we might wait a few more years. (Alpha, April 1991)

One concern at this time in the discussion on bulk funding was that there was no connection made between trustees having this responsibility and how it could change what was happening in the classroom.

> There is no educational outcome at stake...It's not an educational issue, it's simply an administrative issue....If they started mucking around with systems that we find too complicated or too difficult for us to handle that's a whole different ball game...like they can do it themselves. (Alpha, April 1991)

So without a link to possible benefits for the school the task of bulk funding was just going to increase the amount of work.

The administration of any chosen system was of concern given that it appeared to make more work for the board. In order to avoid problems the best administrative system would be a cashless[29] one but in essence that was in place already, the only difference would be that the schools would be charged for a central payroll service in Wellington to arrange the payment of salaries. "In effect the same people would do it that are doing it now, but they would charge [the school] a lot more." (Alpha, April 1991)

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[29]'Cashless' in this context refers to the money being allocated to schools, as the operational grant is, but with the money then going on the central payroll office for distribution. This would result in the school not having to administer the money and pay teachers directly.

There was a 'positive side' to the implementation of bulk funding recognised at Alpha's April meeting. The change would move toward what the Picot Report recommended- "it gives the Board of Trustees a lot more say in how their funding is allocated to the school". This would mean in terms of this school that extra teaching hours could be bought to cover increasing roll problems without waiting for permission from the Ministry of Education. This was held as an ideal but the "actual mechanics" would still require more work for someone on the board:

> That's the bit that I think I don't like, volunteer people who've given up time, and they've to sit down and do this. (Alpha, April 1991)

The soundness of this was brought into question:

> But is there any other business anywhere which gives that sort of thing to amateurs and volunteers? (Alpha, April 1991)

It is curious that, as mentioned above, the trustees at Alpha did not appear to see the link between classroom outcomes and bulk funding and yet there was, as shown in paragraph immediately above. While I did not follow up on this and I cannot account for what was happening at this point it would seem that the trustees were not going to accept bulk funding because of the expectation that there would be a big increase in workload for someone. Maybe there is a limit to what the trustees will accept in workload as a trade off against increased 'autonomy'.

The implied solution is that if the school does control the budget then they could pay themselves to do the extra tasks but this would only work if extra money was credited to the school for such tasks and it resulted in the appointment of administrators. There were also other budgeting decisions to be made that the board would not be able to avoid especially if the Employment Contracts Act was to become a feature of appointments within schools. "We still have to decide if teacher A got more than teacher B and why" (Alpha, April 1991):

> In order to analyse the class [size] factor we should come back to a dollar value - a dollar and cent value [of] whether we can afford this - this is under bulk funding, whether we can afford that person or get two cheaper ones for the price of one. Eventually we will think that way, I don't care what anybody says, it comes down to dollars and cents in the end, 'yes'. (Alpha, April 1991)

The end result for Alpha at this meeting was a unanimous decision to reject bulk funding. For some it was a decision based on theoretical problems they had with bulk funding and for others it was the practical problems of implementation.

It was in August 1991 that the Minister of Education announced the trial scheme which would make it possible for all schools to 'opt in'[30] to bulk funding. In order for schools to become part of the scheme they would have to register an interest with the Ministry of Education. They would then be sent more information which would detail what their teaching grant would be and the board would then usually be given a week in order to decide if they wanted to take part in the trial or not. The trial was not supported by the New Zealand Educational Institute (the primary school teachers union) who directed its members not to apply for positions in those schools who are part of the trial. Each month the NZEI publish in its *Rourou* a list of schools in the trial who have vacancies for teaching staff.

The chairperson of Delta was more open to the idea of bulk funding but in general there had been a negative view expressed by others on the board during discussion prior to the trialing option becoming available. The chairperson's introduction of the matter indicated that he wanted to discuss the options in full before making any decision:

> And maybe I can go through some of the things that they've stated first, and they've offered some carrots to encourage us to do this, and some reasons, as to why it may be helpful and ... one or two of them actually sound ... ah quite ... good reasons, and then we can discuss it. (Delta, August, 1991)

After some initial clarifications about the details, discussion centred around whether the school would be better off in terms of funding. The Ministry would use a formula to work out how much to provide each

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[30]The British system of Grant Maintained Schools (GMS) has been introduced in a similar manner whereby schools could choose to 'opt out' of the mainstream and take on similar responsibilities that are discussed under the heading of bulk funding in New Zealand (Bowe et al. 1993).

school for salaries and it was this that would seem to dictate whether it was a viable alternative in the first instance. The chairperson's view was that if the formula was favourable then he would favour adopting the programme in order to take advantage of the extra resources. Added to this was the possibility of opting out at the end of two years, assuming it had not become mandatory by then. The staff representative who had strong connections with the NZEI wanted to emphasise that change would create winners and losers - not necessarily in this school - but across the country and that through solidarity this 'set up' could be avoided:

> Yes, I guess you're right Rodney, but what I think what we're more focussing on is our own situation, we're less aware of the national situation....Our interests are in Delta School, yours are in Delta but they're also in the wider teaching area. (Delta, August, 1991)

There was also a question about whether the boards would eventually be forced into the programme at some later stage and so maybe they would be better off moving into bulk funding now given there will be extra support.

This was a position reiterated at an Alpha meeting where it was thought that the formulas used in the early trial would be individualised for the school but if it was mandated then one formula would be used for all schools and would create 'losers and winners'.

When an Alpha trustee asked why the changes were being made the principal replied:

> So why are they doing it? I haven't worked it out too much, I think it's to take responsibility away from themselves. And I think eventually, we'll lose on it, I mean it's how we... lost on all that discretionary money. And all that extra hours thing just went, and the thing that you said to the auditor this morning that our roll's gone up and so we should have had more hours for our secretary but we never got any extra money at all. But they say anything like that is there and we have no idea where it is, and it was the same with the swimming pool. (Alpha, July 1991)

These types of problems, combined with ongoing changes to such things as teacher relief and sick leave, where schools now had to pay for relief

teachers after the first two days, meant that there were cynical views of change and the reasons why the Ministry of Education was making them.

The Epsilon chairperson introduced the issue of bulk funding as a problem of whether the school wants to get involved in political issues. Having had to work through some difficult issues before in relation to employment matters the chairperson was not wanting to repeat earlier mistakes. Another trustee thought it would be necessary to make sure that all members were conversant with the ideas of bulk funding and aware of the issues before they arose, thereby allowing for "intelligent informed discussion". This was also considered important in the light of contrasting views being presented by the NZEI and the STA. The one difficulty in having informed discussion was that "no one knew the facts" and "no one can know what outcomes will result". "We also need a guarantee that no hidden agendas exist." All these things were seen as unlikely given the Government's performance so far and the way the framework can be put in place and then the content changes [31]. The end result of the discussion was the motion that "the board seeks information from the Ministry as to bulk funding".

For Delta there was also a difficulty in not sending the 'wrong message' to the Minister of Education. He may take it that lots of schools are interested in bulk funding whereas they are only registering interest to find out how their budgets would compare. There were suspicions that if the interest was too high the Minister might then say that all schools would have to take part.

The principal's position was that it was difficult to anticipate how circumstances might change and for him there was the increased work that bulk funding would create in terms of management. At present current awards might dictate current conditions but if there was a movement to individual contracts then this would give more responsibility to boards and increase the workload. For the chairperson

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[31] In many ways this idea was confirmed when, having set up the trial for two years for a decision to be made of bulk funding, the Minister then went ahead and arranged for the bulk funding of management salaries in schools.

the way salaries might be negotiated was a separate issue, whereas, the principal and staff representative felt they were interconnected. The staff representative was willing to invite an NZEI field officer to speak to the board to help clarify the situation and at that time there was no need for an immediate decision.

The STA's position on the matter was that they were encouraging boards to register an interest in order for them to ascertain how they might fare under bulk funding. One Delta board member considered that this was playing along with the minister and it may also support the president of the STA's feeling on the matter despite what the boards themselves may feel. This was also amidst claims that the STA would not take sides on the matter until after a trial.

The chairperson felt there was a certain inevitability about the whole issue and that "even a change of government will not guarantee a turn around on the matter". It was agreed to invite the NZEI field officer to come along to the next meeting in order to elaborate further upon the subject.

Two of the schools applied to the Ministry and registered an interest in taking part in the bulk funding trial in order to get further information. Both subsequently declined to take part in the trial on the basis of the shortfall they would be facing in comparison with their expected budgets for 1992. Delta reported in the local community paper that "The Board of Trustees have considered the matter of bulk funding but with a $35 000 shortfall, declined to join the scheme" and Epsilon was anticipating a $54000 deficit if it joined the scheme. While the Ministry would consider dispensation for such schools where this happened it would be done case by case.

Because of the amount of information received from the Ministry of Education the trustees of Epsilon wanted another meeting so they had a chance to "absorb the information". The decision was delayed a week. Someone asked how parents and teachers should be informed of the meeting as there was no newsletter before the agreed date. The reply was that they did not want to make a 'big deal' about it. It should be acknowledged that the meeting was being held but it was not the intention to invite others. The deputy principal, standing in for the

principal at this meeting presented to the board a series of recommendations on bulk funding and teacher registration developed by the NZEI and endorsed by staff at Epsilon as a result of a staff meeting. Trustees did not find the NZEI initiative very positive describing it as 'blackmail' and 'getting people's backs up'. This was endorsed by others saying "this was not the way to make a partnership work. The staff member said it was not his intention to threaten trustees but to 'attack an ideology'. This did not overcome the feeling of the board and a trustee replied that:

> parents are just as concerned about the schooling of their children as teachers were but in this case the NZEI had lost the opportunity to join with parents to stamp it out, instead it has shot itself in the foot.

The meeting endorsed the staffs' recommendations about teacher registration but not that of bulk funding.

There was no reference to the decision at the following meeting and on querying a trustee about this I was told that the decision was taken without parents and teachers present as it was seen as a matter of governance thus eliminating the teacher input and as it was not policy development it did not require parent input. This person described the tension between the board and teachers in terms of the "board thought it was making decisions that were the best for the school and the children, and the teachers didn't always like it." My interpretation on this point is that the board did not like being dictated to by the teachers when the trustees felt it was a decision for the board to make. The dislike is heightened by the thought that the teachers might not believe the boards are making decisions based on what is best for the school's children, constituting a challenge to their competence rather than motives. [32]

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[32]While four of the boards at least referred to bulk funding in the meetings, Beta was the exception and I have no record of them even referring to it in my notes over five meetings and the only mention of it in the board's minutes that I have for four meetings was as part of correspondence but there was no record of discussion.

Role conflict and confusion[33]

In none of the five boards in this study were there obvious difficulties arising from the confusion between management and governance as might warrant the media attention given to schools around the country when difficulties arose. Two examples of conflict were a dispute between the Waimumu board of trustees and another group of parents in the school (Dungey, 1993, p. 1) and a dispute between the board of trustees and the principal at Timaru Girls' High School (New Zealand Press Association, 1993a, p. 9). The president of the Secondary Principals' Association had suggested that an education commissioner was required to deal with disputes between school boards and principals. He felt that someone with experience and credibility in education could handle disputes rather than the Minister of Education. The School Trustees Association was monitoring the situation and cited the following reasons as the causes of conflict: personality conflict; role definition and confusion; principal competence; board competence; and community intervention (Topham-Kindley, 1994, p. 10). This response comes after a High Court decision that the Minister of Education did not have the power to dissolve Waimumu's school board of trustees and call for new elections. The difficulty with media reports, and even first hand accounts, is working out how much of a problem is a result of role 'confusion' among members of a board who are not sure who is doing what as opposed to power struggles between people who know what roles they want only to find the desired role overlaps with someone else's desired role.

Some examples of role confusion drawn from the five schools in the current study include the earlier example of the board buying a photocopier, when the board had earlier delegated to staff the responsibility for deciding which model to purchase, and then withdrawing the responsibility and making the decision themselves

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[33]The booklet *A Guide to Governance and Management* released by the Principals' Implementation Taskforce (1990) which provides principles for differentiating board roles has already been discussed in chapter 2.

because in not setting financial limits for those delegated to work within staff had chosen a model the board felt they could not afford.

At Alpha board there was an example of this when the principal and chairperson appointed a relieving teacher to a regular part-time position without the knowledge of the other trustees. On hearing about this some of the trustees expressed a concern about not "being kept in the know" on such matters.

At another school the principal felt that there had been a number of problems related to the sorting out of finance. A team including the principal, board member and a part-time staff member was put together to sort out the boundaries between governance and management and watch for 'overlaps'. For example a question was raised as to whether the board member should be involved in paying staff salaries. In the smaller schools where there is no one else in a management position to delegate responsibilities beyond the principal it may seem like a helpful way board members can reduce the workload of the principal. Indeed if one was to extrapolate this idea to sole charge schools it would seem very difficult to keep management and governance separate because they are concepts based on differing notions of practice especially in terms of policy development (governance) and policy implementation (management). The participation of trustees and/or sub-committees of smaller schools in management is acknowledged in the *Guide to Governance and Management* (Principal's Implementation Taskforce, 1990a) but then goes on to say this should only be done under the "invitation and guidance of the Principal" (p. 3) where it is the responsibility of the board to make sure these people have a clear idea of their roles and the reporting process so that their dual roles are kept distinct. This is achieved by negotiation.

The principal at Epsilon believed that the distinction was very dependent on the amount of time that trustees spent at school. The chairperson at Epsilon would spend some time every day at the school even in addition to competing normal work commitments. This would allow the chairperson to be kept informed of issues as they occurred and if necessary work on resolving them as they arose which seemed to work a lot better than if they were left for a week or more. Other trustees would also spend time at the school and one in particular had an interest in

property matters and this was an instance where the principal believed that ongoing negotiation was required to maintain the distinction between management and governance otherwise there would tend to be a shift in decision-making from the principal to this particular trustee. Nevertheless the school had undergone a lot of maintenance and refurbishment and the principal was appreciative of the particular trustee's input. Thus it was not a matter of the trustee attempting to become involved in activities that the principal would rather the trustee did not but rather the trustee and principal working together with overall decision-making remaining with the principal unless delegated. The challenge for the principal was to maintain this relationship at school without upsetting the trustee and yet acknowledging the trustee's role in governance in other board matters.

In two separate interviews informants referred to the relationships between the teachers and the board. In one interview with a principal they described how they felt it was their role to "protect the staff from the board of trustees". This is done by "keeping the kids in front of the board" so they can see what is delivered rather than focussing on how it is being delivered. At the same time with only one new trustee coming onto the board in 1992 the principal believed the board had moved "apart from the parent body". This gap had been filled by the teachers who would pass on to the board, via the principal, what parents of their pupils were saying. This would be expressed as the needs of the children. Thus "the staff are providing leadership and the board are following with support. And the board are happy with that."

On interviewing a trustee about unintended consequences of the reforms the trustee, who had a large input into school sports prior to the changes in 1989, said she "wasn't expecting the hostility between the teachers and the board. The board was not going to be accepted and so the board had to emphasise the governance - management distinction but this [hostility] is dying away". This 'hostility' had made it difficult to maintain the sporting involvement. "The staff felt threatened. Thought we might expect too much so I feel that the teachers kept the board in the dark to prevent us raising expectations." She felt there was support, from the Education Review Office's review of the school, for the board to have a greater knowledge of what is happening in classrooms.

In an example of the staff attempting to influencing governance the trustee above referred to a teacher and the caretaker on a sub-committee putting forward a recommendation for a purchase of $1200 not in the budget. The treasurer was "very good at not bending to demands", whereas "the year prior there was a $15 000 blow out due to the principal and others giving in to demands of mainly the deputy principal."

These later examples give indications that 'role confusion' is not just occurring between principals and trustees but is also present between the staff and board. It would appear that the staff are also attempting and succeeding to influence the governance process. There is also the reverse process whereby trustees are making judgements about what might be considered professional issues or curriculum matters. Indeed as mentioned previously many trustees do not see curriculum matters as coming within trustee jurisdiction yet the earlier description of family grouping as a way of placing children in classes was one instance where parents held strong beliefs and felt that this was something they should control. Religious education was also in this category.

School Trustees Association

One of the main participants in fashioning the move towards bulk funding was that of the STA. When I first started attending meetings of boards in April 1991 one of the first references to the STA was to a local STA meeting which some of the Trustees attended:

> It was interesting, it was one of the few times I think that I've gone to a meeting and I haven't seen a yawn anywhere.
>
> Was it as riotous as the paper painted it?
>
> Probably [not having read the article]
>
> It got pretty vocal, but as the same time it was very orderly, there was no snapping of the speakers, it was certainly a very spirited meeting.
>
> I think it was a very strong voice from the Boards of Trustees to the STA that they were our representatives out there. They were wrong.
>
> When the STA was set up initially they said it would be an organisation guided from the bottom, not directed from the top. It doesn't seem to have quite worked. Well, they got the message. (Alpha, April 1991)

Prior to the meeting the national body of the STA which represents boards of trustees, had advocated bulk funding within schools without surveying the boards themselves to show they had such a mandate for this position. The attitude of particular individuals associated with the local STA was also seen to be non representative:

> It's probably worth mentioning too that Lynne Guy, who is the chairman of our regional STA group... is voicing her own opinion.
>
> She defended the STA stance on things rather vigorously.... I think we both felt she should have been there to listen to what we had to say and to take that message on our behalf and tell them what we thought rather than standing out defending the position of the national board.
>
> She's standing there with all these people telling her what they think in the same voice, telling her what they thought, and she was arguing back and I heard on the radio the next day or a few days later that we didn't understand what we were doing and so ... which concerns me, and I think you should know. (Delta, April 1991)

Some thought it would be a difficult job to do but that her position was made more difficult given that it was voluntary:

> Perhaps if she was paid by the Boards of Trustees to do what she does, then she might do what we tell her to do instead. There's no accountability to the people who they are working for. (Delta, April 1991)

The Delta board also received a report describing how a representative of the Ministry of Education presented bulk funding as a policy that had its origins as far back as the Picot Report and that at some stage it was intended to introduce it. The response of the 100 people reported to be there was:

> Anyway there was [a] really unanimous feeling that we didn't want the bulk funding passed down to us, that we didn't put ourselves in position on boards to be administrators of funds. That wasn't what we were here for. We wanted to have input into the running of our schools, we didn't want to be cluttered up with having yet another technical thing to do, for a number of good reasons. (Delta, April 1991)

There were reflections that policy was out of the hands of boards because it was made from Wellington but on this matter most, if not all, present at the meeting were opposed.

The people who had been at the meeting had found it difficult to ascertain the Ministry speaker's position on bulk funding. While he was trying to stay neutral on the matter one person felt that "he wasn't arguing for it and on the other hand I had a distinct feeling that he approved of the idea."

The newspaper followed the meeting with an article:

> School trustees last night rejected the bulk funding of teachers' salaries at a meeting in Dunedin. About 50 board members attended an informal meeting called by the School Trustees Association to discuss issues of concern, including bulk funding of teachers' salaries, the Employment Contracts Bill, education review and deferred maintenance. (Lawson, 1991d, p. 2)

The thought that the STA was not representing the boards continued to be used to interpret reports about the STA or its president. Firstly there was discussion as to how a local person came to be elected as a national councillor:

> Well I've heard nothing about him, I wouldn't know who he is?

The same person on being given some details continued:

> You know, I have no problem with him, I have problems with the approach, the method that's used.
>
> No, the whole set up, STA set up...has been rather undemocratic. (Delta, June 1991)

This feeling was compounded by finding out that the new president of the NZSTA was a member of the *Auckland Educational Forum* an educational pressure group which supports bulk funding:

> But he's representing trustees who in the main...are against bulk funding. I can't see how he can be a member of that.
>
> Well, well, maybe we should think about whether we really want to belong to the [STA]...if it's going to cost the school two hundred dollars. (Delta, June 1991)

Rather than sever connections with the STA one board member volunteered to attend one of their next meetings to find out what had been happening. Someone followed up with:

> Is this the same sort of concern that was being expressed a couple of months ago at their lack of ...
>
> Consultation.
>
> Yep.
>
> But this is at regional level, a couple of months ago it was the national. (Delta, June 1991)

It appeared that some of the board members found the STA structure that created national, regional and local STA groups confusing, especially in terms of paying fees to the local and national bodies and sorting out correspondence from each. This was encouraged by two of the three levels charging their own fees for membership to their part of the STA [34]. The debate about the STA's role in bringing about bulk funding did not arise at the Gamma and Beta boards and I did not attend the April meeting of Epsilon to find out what may have been discussed there.

In summarising the discussion presented above some newspaper articles reflect some of the ironies of representation and the nature of consultation. On a number of occasions there were reports that the STA resented the government's failure to consult on matters:

> The School Trustees Association has told the Government to involve trustees in decisions or it will lose their support.(New Zealand Press Association, 1991a, p. 4)
>
> The Otago School Trustees Association, which represents school boards, said yesterday it was outraged at the lack of consultation, which might have led to unfair decisions being made. (Lawson, 1991i, p. 2)

Thus the STA was guilty of doing the very same thing of which they were accusing the Ministry of Education. When the President of the STA was asked why he supported bulk funding of teachers' salaries when more than 80% of trustees were opposed to it he said that he regularly passed

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[34]As referred to earlier in chapter five. Delta referred to this as a problem, but without discussion, and Epsilon referred to this problem with donations from other groups.

onto the government the level of opposition to the proposals. However, the STA's role was more than representation but also "looking beyond immediate concerns to future directions for education" (Lawson, 1991e). In the same report the president of the STA would tend to talk about self-managing schools and their advantages rather than focusing on bulk-funding which he claimed the STA had not taken a stance on because the government had not made a commitment to a funding option. The Minister of Education was also using the term self-management to refer to bulk-funding (New Zealand Press Association, 1991d, p. 4). This has much stronger appeal to trustees who draw on the idea of self-management as being one of the major principles behind the Picot Report (Taskforce to Review Educational Administration, 1988). Bulk funding was viewed as an administrative load that could be independent of self-management. As one of the above quotes mentioned - "We wanted to have input into the running of our schools, we didn't want to be cluttered up with having yet another technical thing to do" (Delta, April 1991).

Administration

In terms of technical things to do the boards had a range of 'in house' matters to attend. For some of the boards this included finding a working format for the operation of their sub-committees. The chairperson at Beta was concerned at the lack of attendance of trustees to their assigned 'working parties'. Each had a chairperson responsible for organising a monthly meeting, running it, writing up the minutes and completing any set tasks. Those minutes were then to get to the board secretary the Friday before the monthly board meeting. The chair of each sub-committee was also responsible for informing staff of meetings, which they were welcome to attend, if they were interested. Gamma and Epsilon made greater use of their sub-committees to discuss issues in detail and take responsibility for making decisions delegated by the full board. The Gamma principal reported that their finance and grounds and buildings sub-committees did a lot of work this way. All material including minutes from sub-committee reports were sent out to trustees a week prior to a full board meeting. They had made a conscious decision to do this in order to reduce the length of full board meetings. Many times reports were accepted without further discussion.

Both Gamma and Epsilon had circulated a short two page article on board procedure found in a national magazine. Gamma felt that their current procedure was working, whereas Epsilon indicated that they were wanting to cut down time but the board's preference was for open discussion on matters as they arose. The article suggested working without a general business section at a meeting which neither Gamma or Beta boards was willing to do. Beta board in particular felt that the opportunity for discussion was very important at meetings but that a lot of discussion could be reduced if people read their sub-committee reports before coming to meetings. Other discussion could be clarified through sub-committees and the board should only have to 'rubber stamp' recommendations.

The principal suggested that the procedures outlined in the article from the magazine be adopted on a trial basis. The chairman said he would outline the procedure - effectively it means that no discussion will go ahead without a motion. ('although some flexibility is desired'). Items to be discussed in 'general business' must be on the agenda prior to the meeting. There was some cause for concern on this matter, the chairman believing that there had been a certain loss of friendliness among the group since a more relaxed approach to meetings had initially been decided upon.

This format was used at the next meeting but was not adhered to in subsequent meetings. In particular, meetings continued to go over time and discussion occurred without motions on the floor. The meeting running to the new format had as the last item of business on the agenda a discussion about the role of the chairman at meetings and within the board in general. Some of the discussion reflected confusion as to whether the chairman should be a facilitator or leader. The Ministry of Education booklet on Governance (Principals' Implementation Task Force, 1990a) was used as a source and the "role of the Chairman" from this was presented to the group for comment. The person presenting this was hoping that the BoT would ratify the "normal role" for the chairperson as presented in this document. The chairman did not like the earlier restrictions placed on him and some matters of what he thought was the 'normal' role had been taken away. This arose when the chairperson made a press release upon a sensitive matter without consulting the board.

The principal said that in "coming together they were trying to clarify the chairman's role in terms of what we brought to the group". This meant that the meeting procedure was to be drawn from the floor. Another member said that they were talking about what could happen based on past experiences but that what was being looked for now was democratic principles that could be used. The chairman said that some of his reservations were based on his previous experience on school committees where people had "suffered from being taken down the garden path." Another member thought that "we have matured enough to be able to vote against the chairman if necessary". The chairman resolved to run the meetings more tersely from a practical point but people were to let him know if it caused problems.

At an interview a trustee described the role of the chairperson as "making sure that each person "had their say". People needed to feel satisfied and it only takes one person to come out feeling "battered" for difficulties to start. She felt that people can go away from a meeting feeling frustrated but not know why. This would suggest that long meetings may reflect the "need" to allow people to have a say, to clarify and make sure that they have an understanding of other peoples thoughts on the issues as they arise. The fast pace of change meant that it would be difficult for a group to function without a lot of time spent in discussion. The idea of only discussing the motions on the table would seem to down play the social aspects of group functioning in order to achieve the tasks set. However, it does not take too long before the neglect of a group's social needs tends to impact on the board's ability to achieve tasks as some of the comments above suggest.

Another aspect of this board's operation was the way decisions were recorded. Sometimes decision making would be delegated to sub-committees but there was often no reference to what decision was made at later board meetings. These decisions were supposed to be included as recommendations in sub-committee reports but a trustee acknowledged that this did not always happen. The board secretary made a recommendation that decisions made between trustees "over a phone" should be recorded in the board minutes. Sometimes people wanted decisions made prior to the next board meeting instead of waiting to accept a recommendation from a sub-committee. The board felt this was

acceptable and the chairperson thought this was supported by the Local Bodies Act but this did not resolve the secretary's concern to record decisions in the minutes. The secretary noted that the "rules seem to change every other week" and she was supported by the principal who compared the situation to "Alice in Wonderland". There was no resolution to this issue for the secretary at the meeting.

At an interview a trustee described these types of problems as reflecting the difficulty with learning new procedures but "people are more clear now as to the procedure and also happy with how it is". She later described how after the board elections in 1992 when only herself and one other person remained on the board that new members saw her as a repository of knowledge about board procedure. The problem was that people would not learn the procedure but continue to make use of her knowledge about how to do things. In the end she felt she was doing the school a disservice and thought that it might be better if she was not there so as to force them to learn the material. The interviewee identified board training as important and that relying on the skills that people had when coming onto a board was not enough. Trustees needed to know the Local Bodies Act and meeting procedure especially as they are legally bound to it.

It was interesting to note, after Gamma board's co-option of two new trustees, the number of times that a speaker would have to stop and elaborate on the various features of discussion so that the new members could understand the content. Much of the learning for the trustees on the boards was very informal and was provided as needed.

Board training

While discussing the budget at one meeting of the Delta board it was noted that nothing had been put aside for board training. It was reported that:

> last year we spent a grand total of five dollars. (Laughter) Now we need to think about whether the board is in fact going to get into training or not. It probably wouldn't be a very large amount, if we did, because obviously, we don't have to employ a relieving board member if you go away on a course... but there is a wee bit of cost there. (Delta, June 1991)

In response a person said they were not even sure what was available and the only note they had about training was advertising a small range of courses. Another board member said that "with only about a year to run how much should be spent on training when another board will be in place?" For another board member what had been made available previously had been considered a 'waste of time full stop', but he went on to say that training itself could be of value.

Roll

References to the importance of the school roll size has been made in other chapters in relation to teacher-pupil ratios and the way maintenance costs are funded.

A number of the boards reported that the school roll was meant to be recorded in board minutes which then becomes part of the auditing process. In July a grading roll is estimated upon which the Ministry of Education then calculates the boards' teaching entitlement and operations' grant for the coming year.

For Epsilon the matter of the roll was a major concern. Because of a change of policy towards family grouping it had lost almost a quarter of its students which resulted in the loss of a teacher. There was then an eagerness to see if the school roll would reach 'the magical' figures that would allow them to take on another teacher. It was suggested that the board apply to the ministry to help with the changing roll that they thought reflected the mobility of people in the community of a central city school. Parents at a meeting had also asked to be kept informed of the 'roll situation'. Despite the earlier reduction the school roll has started to grow again. This has been achieved by a range of means that will be considered in the next section.

Alpha board's concerns with their roll was described in chapter 4. Their roll is currently increasing and "the board still pays for teaching hours to keep the teacher-pupil ratios down". This comes about because although the schools are not allowed to pay for more teachers out of their operational grant, once a school has 0.6 of a teacher they will often be given permission by Ministry to cover the other 0.4 from their operational grant.

Recapitation

Epsilon and Beta, both smaller schools, worked through the issues of recapitation; Beta as a way of increasing the roll in order to resolve funding problems, and according to the chairperson for Epsilon, for their school it was "to give parents greater choice". The Beta chairperson had arrived at a board meeting with a newspaper clipping from the same day which indicated that "new legislation also abolishes the need for primary schools wanting to keep form I and II pupils to go through a compulsory community forum" (New Zealand Press Association, 1991b, p. 3)[35]. The changes were a result of the *Education Amendment Act* 1991 which was better known for the removal of zoning in secondary schools. The previous process of using a community forum to consult those involved was described by the chairperson as "long-winded". As it was, the board realised that the new process would take a while given previous experience of the Ministry's ability to implement policy, even if the 1992 year was over six months away.

The changes could be positioned within the school mission statement specifying the need to provide a caring atmosphere. It was reasoned that the older pupils would enhance the family atmosphere. The principal couched it within the idea of providing more options so it would not mean that the school would be saying "you must stay on here". There was the concern that no school would get extra buildings although they would get the regular per pupil operational funding. The school at that time had plenty of room and so numbers were not seen as a problem. Should it become a popular choice then the situation might change. The first step was to get more information as part of a feasibility study. However, the chairperson reported that the process of recapitation was not clear as the Ministry (who had no information) was not able to keep up with the Minister's changing policy. The chairperson saw the need to "start somewhere" and so suggested a start by consulting the parents.

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[35]The new approach was made possible after the Minister of Education had evaluated some schools that had already gone through the process of recapitation.

The chairperson described the meeting as interesting. Seventeen parents had attended. There was a small piece in the local paper following the meeting where those in attendance were recorded. The questions asked were many and varied and overall the feeling was described as positive. Others were not so confident as some parents had expressed a concern about the first kids being guinea pigs. Someone else asked if the children themselves had been consulted but the chairperson pointed out that any final decision was with the parents. The principal thought that it was unprofessional to ask the children at this stage. There was now the question of what to do next. Despite the uncertainty of how to go about recapitation the principal reminded the BoT that "we have led in lots of ways...and we are not frightened to do things that are different. People are identifying this school with change."

Alongside the idea of recapitation was the changing nature of the relationship that Beta had with the intermediate to which it currently contributed its standard four pupils. The principal from the intermediate had made a request for the opportunity to contact all the parents of standard four pupils but the Beta board was unsure of how to fulfil the request, if at all. There was some confusion about how parents had been supplied information previously but it was thought that an invitation to an open day had been sent home to parents via the children. Applying the same idea a trustee wondered whether it would be legitimate to ask for the names and addresses of all prospective parents at local preschools, or for that matter if Beta was recapitating, would the intermediate pass on contact information of parents of form I children? There were a range of possibilities but the difficulty was that even passing information on to parents would not necessarily be in the school's best interest. One person thought the board should approach the situation as if the school was "going into the market place and competing" and therefore nothing should be done to disadvantage the school. An opposing view was that "if people want to stay they will". Neither of these ideas were taken up directly in the discussion and developed by others despite the chairperson believing they were offering parents a choice rather than saying "you must stay on here". Meanwhile the principal said "we want to do things as nicely as possible" because if there was any tension she would 'cop the flak'. The board decided to formalise the request from the intermediate by asking exactly

what the intermediate expected of the school. From the reply the intermediate made it clear that the request was for the names of the students. Beta's response was to ask for the intermediate's prospectus which it would then pass on to the parents of the students. It later took a ruling from the Ombudsman to resolve the matter which favoured Beta not having to pass on information to the intermediate school.[36]

The minutes for Epsilon's board meeting record that an application for recapitation was made although it was also noted that the "application is no guarantee that we will pursue this in the long term - We are keeping our options open" (Epsilon minutes, August 1991). The school had also made an application in 1990 but on both occasions the application was turned down without reasons being given. A trustee hypothesised that the Education Review Office's reports on the school were not favourable in supporting an application. The school has succeeded in other attempts to increase its roll by adding 'special' classes, one of which is not offered elsewhere in Dunedin, and thereby relieving some of the pressure occasioned by a falling roll.

Summary

This chapter has described a wide range of governance and personnel issues facing the boards and their responses. In particular the governance issues reflect trustees' ideas about their role as parents in the reform process and what type of activities they thought were legitimate activities for boards as well as the difficulty creating their own administrative systems. The section above on personnel demonstrated how the relationships between the parent trustees and staff were changing over time. Parents recognised the importance of the staff in the educational process and found that the social nature of governing the school required trustees to be 'fair' in their decision making about staff matters.

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[36]Epsilon also considered the idea of recapitation but unfortunately I missed the meeting at which it was discussed.

Chapter 7

Analysis of Themes in Data

The previous three chapters described and summarised the focal concerns of the boards within the loose classification system of finance, property, educational objectives, community relationships, personnel and governance. The aim was to describe in detail the many focal concerns that the board faces as part of its ongoing existence. Separating what is continuous, connected and complex into categories for the purpose of description tends to over simplify the activity. As noted many of the focal concerns appeared in multiple categories. This chapter will now reconnect the focal concerns using themes that are repeated across the categories. The themes are developed around dilemmas which are represented as contradictions, ambiguities or ambivalences that the boards are faced with as they resolve to carry out their responsibilities for school governance.

This approach will be used in order to characterise in a more general way some of the wider tensions in the educational reforms. I will use the conceptual tool of dilemma developed by Berlak and Berlak (1981) outlined earlier in this study (chapter 3) and used by Bowe, Ball and Gold (1992) in their analyses. These dilemmas are reflected in the thought and action of the trustees as they try to make sense of the continuous process of the social world in which they act. The trustees' interpretations of these dilemmas and their expectations and preferences as to how they would like them resolved will reveal an overriding themes that is beginning to dominate trustee action. The four themes that arise out of the dilemmas are:

(i) the boards' preference for structured reform;

(ii) a supported environment;

(iii) shared responsibility for outcomes; and

(iv) a focus on school needs.

Each of these will now be elaborated upon separately but like many of the issues the boards faced they are highly interrelated. The interrelationships will be considered when the themes will be brought together as a model of board expectations about educational reform.

Structured Reform

The theme of structured reform arises from two dilemmas that the boards expressed. The first was to have some certainty about what they were doing and the second, which related to the first, was for the Ministry of Education to provide some certainty by not changing the rules that the boards have to operate by in the midst of the reform.

Certainty vs uncertainty

Some of the elements of certainty that were desired were in terms of political stability, board funding, Ministry of Education knowledge of the changes and commitments to decisions made.

In terms of political certainty, the change of government at the end of 1990 had resulted in a new Minister of Education and as previously mentioned it was this minister that instigated a one per cent funding reduction based on enrolments at the beginning of 1991. Then followed the 'mother of all budgets' - the first from a female Minister of Finance in New Zealand political history - which created its own uncertainty as a direct result of the media activity that surrounded it. And while the sort of changes that had been anticipated by boards did not eventuate, such as the increased staff - student ratios the period leading up to and immediately after the budget saw a large amount of time spent in discussing possible outcomes for schools. There was agreement within Beta's board that the Ministry of Education was probably holding onto the school's POD until after the budget, expecting that more changes would be made even though it had been signed. The board was aware of a neighbouring high school that had its charter changed after it had been signed by the Ministry of Education. If anything there was a growing expectation that nothing was certain. Despite money being allocated for particular projects the view was that "the rules can still change".

As mentioned in chapter four some of the boards had delayed their second budget in order to get audited accounts back so as to provide information to finalise their second budget even if this meant waiting until they were six months into the financial year. Financial uncertainty had been increased because there was no historical data available as to what

many of the costs to schools were in conducting their activities. An example of this cited earlier was of the two schools who had swimming pools and were unsure of their running costs. Thus uncertainty was increased by a lack of information.

The Ministry of Education was portrayed as controlling the reform and were frequently looked to for advice and information. When it was not forthcoming, or contradictory information was received, this impeded the ability of boards to govern and increased the uncertainty - recall the example of Alpha attempting to get Ministry approval for more teaching hours and Beta receiving differing advice as to whether boards set salaries for non-teaching staff.

Risk, a feature of business, became prominent for the boards as uncertainty increased. For Alpha board there was an accompanying financial risk, increased by the uncertainty of Ministry approval for their new building, which required a large commitment in terms of time and money from the board in order for their proposal to be ready for approval. - hence the earlier quote:

> The sooner we get it done the better.
> Before things change again. (Alpha, August 1991)

One of the things that had not changed significantly was the perceived role of the PTA within school communities. There was effort needed to establish a working relationship between the newly formed boards and the established role of the PTA.

Changing Rules

Associated with the dilemma of certainty-uncertainty was a feature uncontrolled by boards but involving intentional change by the ministry. It was usually described by using the metaphor of 'a game'. The game was school administration and connotations of unfair play were associated with unilateral decisions to change 'rules', which included decisions, regulations, and agreements, when at the very least it was thought proper that consultation should have occurred. Examples mentioned include the government charging schools for GST on money received for specific purposes, such as grant money to employing Task Force Green Workers, which was to be made retrospectively. The possibility that signed

documents are not necessarily binding was considered by Beta in particular to constitute changing the rules unilaterally without entering into negotiation or consultation (which is an important feature of one of the other themes to be described later). The proposed changes to the handling of some of Delta's maintenance work also fits in here as did Epsilon's painting of the school. In this last example the board was expressing the possibility of the Ministry reneging on the POD agreement thus indicating that boards were now expecting the worst from the Ministry in the process of providing a stable structure for reform which did not seem open to negotiated change. This constituted changing the rules.

Another example was the change in conditions of first year teachers who were 'above-establishment'. The reduction of the funding in schools from two years to one was considered to demonstrate the 'cruel' nature of the Ministry where it was 'picking on' the most vulnerable members of the profession.[37] One could speculate that the reversal of the decision was seen as a return to the rules of "fair play" and that it could also represent a victory against the "playground bully", and more importantly it further confirms the political nature of the change whereby "might is right "and that unless boards work together to keep "tabs" on the Ministry anything may happen and any rules are just an illusion.

This might be compared to an alternative explanation with regard to intention, in the example of the changing of the rules when a school was in the midst of replacing buildings - which was regarded as the height of lunacy on the part of the Ministry of Education. The worry for the boards was that the Ministry did not know what it was doing, thus increasing uncertainty and suggesting that the reform was occurring in a climate of chaos rather than being deliberate and centrally controlled according to a rational plan based on the ideals of the Picot Report and Tomorrow's Schools.

That the schools wanted certainty was highlighted in comments about proposed changes to legislation to allow non-registered teachers to work

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[37]Another hint of the 'playground game 'metaphor.

in schools. In order to maintain the structure which the boards were satisfied with, they said that they would not consider employing unregistered teachers for vacancies in their schools and would adopt this as policy.

Supported Environment

Closely aligned with the preference for structured reform was the wish for a supported environment. The trustees were volunteers who were there primarily because of their interest and desire rather than any competence or ability, although in some senses they were considered to be correlated. The support was to be provided centrally via the Ministry of Education. The alternative was implied in the 'market driven environment' whereby success and failure are expected and schools are on their own. With the closure of the Invercargill Office of the Ministry and the anticipated eventual closure of the Dunedin office the restructuring meant

> that by the end of it the thing that you could definitely say is there are no answers and you are on your own.
>
> That is what it seems to be, that they're [Southland schools] going to be really self governing schools, completely independent schools.
>
> Oh yes, on your own. (Alpha, July 1991)

This isolation is not only from central agencies as schools now compete with other schools with which they would have previously co-operated.

Boards made references to what would happen if they found themselves financially bankrupt. If this was to happen then the schools 'were on their own'. The trustees remembered being told that if there were unexpected expenses then they could go to the Ministry for help but this did not happen when two of the schools applied for extra funding.

Some trustees were worried that if they declared a surplus then they would get less the following year and, with the thought of the one per cent reduction that had not long occurred, this might not seem a surprising expectation. This did not occur. However, fundraising to supplement school income was considered the norm and as previously mentioned was encouraged via publicised Ministry comments. The diversion of capital

works to deferred maintenance as mentioned previously meant that Alpha had to 'go it alone' with its own building.

This was despite the comment in the local newspaper that the Ministry would want to make sure that schools were meeting educational requirements before allowing schools to go out and build on their own, whereas Alpha was building in order to meet educational needs in the school. In some cases the trustees felt that the Ministry was actively obstructing the boards' desires to fulfil the needs they saw within their own schools, as in the example of Beta's POD and their desire to fund their own maintenance. No doubt many schools felt this way when their names did not make it to the top of deferred maintenance and capital works priority funding lists. For Alpha this was epitomised by the Ministry charging the school for a consultant as part of the approval process of developing its own building. They were of the belief that they were 'picking up the tab' for something the Ministry should have done anyway as part of their supporting the boards in their efforts to govern.

The Ministry did provide a lot of support which the boards appreciated. Two examples were the equity and vandalism grants that some schools were awarded annually if they had been identified as 'at risk'. So when things are operating well one tends not to hear about the support being provided, but rather when things go wrong. Such as example was the insurance scheme the government had put in place because of the large costs due to arson, incurred by the Ministry . The schools in Otago had already arranged their own support and did not want to be disadvantaged by any system that the Ministry was putting in place. As part of taking on the responsibility for themselves Delta board was willing to work through the problem of valuation for insurance purposes to make sure that they had "done it right", even if it meant getting another valuation.

Likewise Gamma seemed to accept the responsibility for making changes to how it managed grass cutting with the aim of reducing costs where possible. However, not all schools who were looking to save large amounts of money were well supported in their efforts to rearrange employment conditions. And one person outlined an example where the Ministry actually denied the advice they had given verbally when the school was technically at fault over an employment matter leading to

court action. This was a case where a new board which was unsure of its position, lacked confidence and finding no support from the Ministry failed to meet its responsibilities with reasonably significant consequences for the school. These sorts of events take up large amounts of energy on the part of the boards and create some cynicism about the role of the Ministry.

Alpha board also felt alone and unsupported in its attempts to modify student - teacher ratios to meet acceptable levels. The priority of school funding based on rolls, rather than school size and class ratios, meant that educational needs were taking second place to administrative requirements. This was one area that boards would probably be able to change as a result of bulk funding of teaching grants but it was not taken up as a major argument in the discussions on the matter. However, the solution, the movement of moneys from the operations grant to the teaching grants, has now become possible without the introduction of bulk funding. This might suggest that trustees are not convinced that Bulk Funding is necessary in order to resolve some of their staffing problems. If a school finds it has .6 or more of a teacher available then the Ministry will usually allow the .4 needed to create a full time position to be taken from the operations grant. Schools can also take on first year teachers under a Taskforce Project whereby the government once again pays a proportion of the teacher's salary with the board meeting the difference.

Working through a period of reform that would often seem uncertain increased the need for support. The allusion to the volunteer status of boards was made when trustees felt that they were being given too much of the administrative workload - the responsibility of the Ministry - rather than a governance role - the responsibility of the board:

> That's the bit that I think I don't like. Volunteer people who've given up time, and they've got to sit down and do this [in reference to the work associated with bulk funding]. (Alpha, April 1991)

Support was also to include training which was outlined in *Governing Schools - A practical guide for School Trustees* (Department of Education, 1989)but it was not the sort that the Trustees were looking for. Of course

no one actually knew what to expect so there was a feeling that any training was a matter of the "blind leading the blind".

The difficulty for the trustees was that they could not know whether the uncertainties of reform were going to inhabit the new educational environment. This is probably dependent on how optimistic they feel about things getting better.

> It was appalling. There was no support. There was nothing in writing and no consistent advice. There was no written backup and no support. Because they [the Ministry of Education] didn't know. They were less prepared than the boards of trustees. The STA had just formed like the new boards. They could not provide support and the NZEI was trying to support teachers. What made things more difficult was that the Ministry of Education Liaison didn't get on with the principal.

On querying whether things had improved:

> The Ministry of Education has not learnt. No, the boards of trustees have learnt to be independent, to stand with decisions and to know where to find information and not feel as threatened by the NZEI and the Ministry of Education. (Trustee, June 1994)

Thus from the perspective of this trustee the boards have learnt to support themselves as opposed to the Ministry providing a centrally supported environment. But given that boards are still dependent on the Ministry then there are continuing possibilities for ongoing conflict and uncertainty. Rather than these being features of the reform they have become part of the new environment. However, five years does not give as sharp a view in hindsight that 10-20 years might.

Shared Responsibility

The perception that the trustees and the Ministry had separate responsibilities and obligations was important in conceptualising the relationship between them both and other groups. Yet this relationship, while formalised in the charter (Department of Education, 1989), was never established prior to the reforms, but arose out of the reforms. Any dilemma within this theme then tended to arise out of ambiguities rather than contradictions. As has already been seen the Ministry was at times

viewed as the metaphorical bully in the administration playground of educational reform. Documentation painted a picture of boards having free reign within broad national guidelines. What happened within the constraints of National Guidelines was dependent on the development of a 'partnership' between professionals and a school's community of which the board was the mechanism for the partnership (Lange, 1988, Taskforce To Review Educational Administration, 1988). Any partnership between the state and the other groups via the charter was to be minimal. Yet the boards' hope for a structured reform and supported environment suggested that more would be required of the Ministry of Education.

A major concern in delegating responsibilities yet maintaining standards was the realignment of accountability in order for the state to maintain some control over the system (Star Weekender, 1989; Topliss, 1989a). The charter was to become the contract between the community and the institution, and between the institution and the state. The removal of the paramount principle and the changing of the charter from an agreement to an undertaking, and the removal of the commitment to fund schools was seen as a realignment of accountability and therefore the way responsibility was to be shared (Codd & Gordon, 1990).

The partnership between community and professionals with the board as a partnership mechanism was soon recast as three groups - the parents, the teachers and the board. However, in essence there were only two - the board and the staff. One of the interesting phenomena of the board relationships was the perception of a them/us distinction between the trustees and the parents of whom they were also members yet their talk of parents were as though they were a totally different group. This was realised in considering relationships between the PTA and other bounded groups as well as the loose-knit group of parents that existed notionally. These conceptualisations were often evident when talking about consultation in relation to policy development:

> Give them the opportunity. And then they can be involved. They can do it if they choose to.
>
> You can't really stop them.
>
> So it is the parents' rights to be involved? (Delta, July 1991)

The term "notional" is used here to describe a group that exists because of some contiguity rather than being made up of a group of people who are involved in continuing social interaction as is the board. Thus the idea of consultation being interactive requires that interaction is socially possible. Informing parents by newsletter would not be enough and maybe the survey method that Epsilon was described as using may not be sufficient either:

> It would not be sufficient for the board to ask parents for their opinions and not get any answers....It is important for boards to communicate in a way people are comfortable with. Some parents do not feel comfortable reading...and others do not feel comfortable expressing their views in a large group. (Topliss, 1989b)

Yet even the way boards were chosen did not amount to much more than a newsletter being sent home with an option to return a reply. The energy required to turn an otherwise notional group[38] into an interactive one for the purposes of ongoing consultation would be difficult to find. As an Alpha trustee mentioned earlier a no response to requests for participation can reflect a job being well done rather than inadequate consultation and thus might be the easier way of reconceptualising the problem.

The boards as small, socially interactive and activity based become more definable and locatable than the notional group of parents. The board representing the parents has become 'the parents' by a process of reductionism.

The teachers were also recast as another them/us group even though two of the voting members on the board had 'membership'. No doubt the new role of the principal meant that teachers may also start to see principals as different from themselves. The underlying partnership could not be avoided and previous comments reflected some ambivalence between the two groups as they faced competing demands such as when a staff member presented the staff's views on bulk funding and teacher

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[38]Sprott (1958) calls these groups secondary as opposed to primary group differentiated by their involvement in social interaction. "The secondary group is, in a sense, purely a figment of the imagination" (p. 16).

registration at an Epsilon board meeting. The non-teaching staff were in a different position again because the board did have control of their salaries and no doubt the teachers did not want to see a repeat performance of the handling of the cleaners' and caretakers' positions within schools. This outcome is made possible with the introduction of the Employment Contracts Act and bulk funding of teachers salaries according to NZEI (New Zealand Educational Institute, 1991a; New Zealand Educational Institute, 1991b).

The *Governing Schools* document outlined some of the ideas behind developing a partnership but, as mentioned previously, the process of extensive consultation was a time consuming and exhausting process and unless such consultation was critical the board embodied the partnership on the basis of representation. This was despite the them/us perception current within boards. Another aspect of the ability of the boards to represent was the staff's access to parents. As described earlier Epsilon's principal believed that the staff were more aware of parent concerns, because of their ongoing access, rather than the board who with only one change in membership over five years was not in such a position to maintain ongoing contact. The question then arises for this particular board as to who is in the best position to 'represent' parents - a small sample of parents who have limited contact with non-trustee parents or teachers who have ongoing contact with a wider set of non-trustee parents?

Another way of developing the relationship between the board and the community was reflected within the issues of fundraising and policy development. In both cases the boards had made use of other groups within the school community to move beyond the notional category of community and parents. Partnership then became enshrined as a relationship between these groups such as the PTA, or the Maori Parents' Group at Alpha school, or the liaison person for new settlers at Epsilon.

The importance of the community in terms of fundraising signified a possible shift in the relationship that was forewarned in the changes to the charter. There had always been an expectation of raising 'extra' funding in the local community or according to Mr Luxton to "earn more money for their schools" (New Zealand Press Association, 1991e, p. 4). Here is an

indication that there might be a shifting of responsibility usually considered to be that of the state to individual schools and their communities. The impression given is that if schools want more money not necessarily for `extras' but for basics then they will need to raise it. How extras and basics are defined in terms of funding is a matter of ongoing debate (New Zealand Press Association, 1994a, p. 4).

There was some ambiguity about the relationship between parents, board and teachers in relation to some curriculum or professional matters. This became prominent within the issue of religious education and family grouping. While apathy characterised the non-trustee parent input into policy development on most areas and ambivalence was expressed by trustee parents certain issues were found to polarise sub groups within the parent community which required careful handling on the part of the board. The idea that governance was about policy development and management was about implementation did not seem as critical in curriculum areas. Many of the trustees saw the curriculum areas of policy development and implementation as professional matters. Every now and then some curriculum content may be questioned as in the case of religious education. Parents were also aware that policy implementation, how things are taught, can also be important in areas such as the issue of staff - student ratios or family grouping. There are then curriculum issues that may create conflict within the partnership based on boards or parents wanting to influence what was considered professional matters and may also be construed as management rather than governance.[39] The nature of the relationship between teachers and the board has become very interdependent (a theme to be developed later on).

The POD was much more salient in terms of operationalising the relationship between the boards and the Ministry than the charter which signifies the formal relationship. This may not have eventuated had there

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[39]C Chitty (1989) describes this as policy development by exclusion. This happens where responsibility has been delegated or allowed to shift and as long as there are no or few problems then this becomes the status quo. If there is a crisis then groups will attempt to reassert their authority so that policy development occurs by inclusion.

not been a large backlog of deferred maintenance that had built up over time prior to the changeover in 1989. One of the positive outcomes of the reform was that the Ministry was obliged to accept responsibility for the maintenance which had been deferred before passing ongoing maintenance onto the boards. It is difficult to know if large amounts of money required to eliminate deferred maintenance would have been made available otherwise. The end result for the boards was, in the main, an acceptance of that maintenance by the Ministry. But there was some tension, not from earlier negotiations themselves, but from the 'changing of the rules' by the Ministry once things had been finalised.

One principal felt this was one aspect of the Ministry that had continued from the previous system - a hierarchical system that operated by imposing rather than by consulting. The pattern of dictatorial consultation has occurred in the closure of 'small' schools. The schools have been 'consulted' says the Ministry of Education. The schools say they have received a letter inviting the school to join the Education Development Initiative (EDI) programme or consider closure. A month later those who have not joined the scheme have been told they will close (New Zealand Press Association, 1994c, p. 3). Given that the Ministry of Education has expected the boards to go to greater lengths to consult their communities than sending out a newsletter the boards are understandably upset when the Ministry does not operate by using the same criteria - another example of changing the rules. For the schools in this study, once the charters and PODs are firmly established, with time the importance of the Ministry should be reduced unless significant policy keeps changing[40].

During 1991 another policy that was going to change the nature of the Ministry relationship with boards and possibly boards with teachers was

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[40]Consultation itself is a term that has some ambiguities associated with its exact operational meaning. One of the factors that contribute to the ambiguity is whether people believe that consensus is necessary before the consultation process can be considered complete in respect of any particular issue. Consensus was a major feature of the process of consultation as described in *Self Governing Schools* (Department of Education, 1989)

that of bulk funding. As mentioned previously the trustees tended to either characterise the issue as one of the Ministry wanting to hand on more administrative (non governance) work to the boards or the Ministry was wanting to move a funding crisis on to the boards. This was reinforced by the two schools who found they would have shortfalls in the tens of thousands if they had gone into the bulk funding trial.

Those who saw it as a pragmatic matter - of whether it would create more work - were more willing to accept the policy if the Ministry was willing to back it up with support such as funding for extra administrators rather than placing 'their' burden onto 'volunteers'. Here again the trustees were looking for a supported environment. Thus trustees did see a role for a central bureaucracy and it would be interesting if trustees saw the importance of this when they were first elected onto boards, or whether it was an outcome of having to do so much themselves in order to "make things happen", that might not be considered reasonable for "volunteers".

In philosophical terms the consideration that bulk funding would change the relationship between the Ministry and the trustees and therefore might change the relationship between teachers and trustees had ongoing implications that were often raised and will be considered below. At the same time as bulk funding was being discussed the Employment Contracts Act was being introduced to parliament[41]. The idea that teachers would have to negotiate individual contracts with boards would change the 'partnership' that the boards (on behalf of the community) were developing with teachers. Part of that relationship was a realisation of the

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[41]The limits of the Employment Contracts Act in the education sector is a result of the trustees being the legal employer of the teachers but the State Services Commission being the state nominated bargaining agent. I would anticipate that people outside the Ministry of Education would not like to see this arrangement change. At present boards can negotiate with principals a salary within an agreed salary scale. The difficulty of monitoring centrally 2 600 boards negotiating individually with teachers would be an administrator's nightmare. Not that boards would want to move to individual contracts, as the work it would create would seem difficult to justify - unless of course the board was faced with falling rolls and falling budget.

difficulties that teachers faced in carrying out their day to day activities. Given that ultimately it is the teachers who see that children are educated, the parent trustees are unlikely to re arrange a working relationship to relieve the Ministry of Education of some of its workload. The trustees are also aware of the social nature of schooling and that staff morale and so on is critical to the creation of a learning environment - and hence their concern for class sizes. Anything that is likely to affect that was viewed negatively by trustees.

If anything, many of the trustees are more likely to want to encourage teachers by shifting operations grant money to further support teachers. However, Bulk Funding could also put pressure on Trustees to increase class sizes, something that, as shown, few were keen to see happen.

In general the boards are positive about provision for leave and staff development, further supporting the idea that the trustees are supportive of the relationship with teachers. This might be contrasted with the distrusting relationship that has developed with the Ministry of Education. One might hypothesise that the comment that there are too many school staff on boards and the subsequent changes in legislation to make it more difficult to have a board made up of mainly school staff, was to alter the relationship in order to make boards more open to bulk funding:

> The decision not to allow parents, who were also staff members of a school, to be on a board of trustees would solve the problem of some boards being made up predominantly of school teachers. The present situation could create a conflict of interest as boards were the employers of teachers. (Lawson, 1991j)

The interesting implication was that staff who are also parents are more likely to give priority to their role as staff rather than their role as parents. The final arrangement was that school staff who were also parents of children at the school had to decide before elections whether they would make themselves available as parents or staff but they could run in both staff and parent elections.

The STA was in an interesting position of representing the boards at the national level and providing localised support for trustees. But as one

trustee noted, the STA had just been set up in 1989 and was not in a position to provide help at a time when it was needed most and hence there was an expectation that the Ministry would fulfil this role. Over time the STA developed its own relationships both locally and nationally, but not always to the expectations of the boards as shown on the matter of the STA coming out in support of the Employment Contracts Act and bulk funding. As was cited earlier the national president commented that the STA has more than a representation role on behalf of the trustees but they must also look to the future (Lawson, 1991e). The furore caused by a transcript allegedly quoting a discussion between the president of the STA and the Minister of Education would seem to support conspiracy theories that the national STA is not only working on behalf of boards but in league with other national figures in order to bring about change desired by national interest groups:

> Mr Shattky said he was concerned some people believed the document meant he had a "secret deal with the minister [of education] to push through bulk funding". (New Zealand Press Association, 1991c, p. 4)

Trustees from Delta also heard that the local representative also appeared to support bulk funding rather than taking the view that she was there to represent the views of the boards of trustees in the Dunedin area who appeared to reject the scheme.

Relationships between 'groups' involved in the process of reforms were very changeable or at least difficult to establish for the trustees. This then meant 'lines of accountability' were very unclear resulting in a movement away from the ideal of equal partnership for all involved in seeing that children received the best education. As the partnership ideal dissolved, with accompanying accountability disappearing, the more isolation in terms of lack of support and the more trustees would feel they were "on their own". And what was worse, as was previously mentioned, some of the partners were turning into enemies. The question might then be asked: are not the supposed partners working together for the same reason, the good of the children?

Schools Needs

This brings to the fore another dilemma that was a feature of board activity, a conflict between the desire to meet the school's needs as identified by the trustees as opposed to meeting government requirements. This was most evident when boards were rationalising the development of policy. For the Delta board policy was a way of formalising problem solving in order to meet the school's needs. At the Gamma board meetings the policy was seen as more of a process of meeting government requirements and as such was only a matter of 'playing with words'. Yet there was a practical dimension to this for the Gamma board because they may also have to account for the policy through review so there was also a need to have 'workable policy' that did not commit the board to goals or criteria they could not meet or maintain.

Alpha and Delta's primary concern about staff student ratios as opposed to concerns about roll numbers in and of themselves again reflects the wish to place what trustees see as the school's needs ahead of the government's working requirements as to how staffing should be allocated.

Epsilon's review of maintenance costs saw that the school's physical maintenance needs were not going to be meet within the present system of funding based on a school's enrolment. In this case the board did not feel that they could move beyond the constraint of funding on this issue to meet what they considered to be the needs of the school. This may not have been as critical if the school had not been facing a falling roll and therefore decreasing funding.

Many of the local concerns that dominated board meetings also reflected a preference to orientate towards schools needs: Delta's discussion on traffic around the school and concerns about the building of a psychiatric centre in the neighbourhood; Gamma's negotiation with preschools' groups to allow them use of the school; Epsilon's concern with family grouping and religious education; Beta's development of a trust to support the school's ongoing development plans; and Alpha's creation of a Maori parents' group. Centralised requirements were often absent on these particular issues and allowed the boards to develop their own responses to these

concerns. This localised decision making had initially been claimed to be the biggest advantage of the policy changes:

> As an operating principle, a decision should be made at that level of the system which is most affected by it and has the best information about its consequences. This means that as far as possible decisions affecting an institution should be made by the institution. (Taskforce to Review Educational Administration, 1988, p. 42)

The bulk funding of operations grants to schools was meant to typify the delegation of responsibility with schools deciding on many issues of meeting school needs. This same idea was also meant to apply to the bulk funding of teaching salaries:

> I look at if from a positive view point. It does do what Picot recommended, it gives the boards of trustees a lot more say in the funding that's allocated to the school.
>
> The current problem wouldn't be there [reference to staff - student ratio].
>
> Yes that's right, we could say, well instead of painting the outside of our school, we'll buy extra teachers. We'll solve the problems.
>
> But the pure mechanics of it, are we going to employ an accountant or somebody to actually do the work?
>
> (Alpha, April 1991)

So the trustees felt that they knew what the school's needs were but so long as they were unsupported they were not willing to accept the responsibility. As noted previously, however, there were times when what constituted schools' needs was a matter of debate between parents and staff.

With such decision making comes accountability, both to the community the board is supposed to represent, and the state which has delegated to the board responsibilities of decision making. There may also be an element of those working at the centre wanting to limit the extent of the delegation from centralised control, and a wish to maintain control of those features considered critical to the education system which allows the government to meets its own obligations. The establishment of national guidelines and forms of monitoring was to make sure that national standards were being met and maintained, suggesting that parents do not know best. None of the boards had been reviewed by the Education Review Office (ERO) at the time I was attending meetings although Delta

was not far away from its first review. This created some speculation on the part of Delta as to what the role of the ERO was within the education system:

> They're basically assessing each school individually to determine that it is functioning satisfactorily. They're not trying to make comparisons between schools as to actual standards, not like the inspector system. (Delta, August 1991)

Part of the process of finding ways to meet school needs will be to assess the government requirements in practice. People on the Delta board were initially under the impression that an ERO review was meant to be a 'positive exercise' whereby the ERO are supporting parents to do a better job. Over time this perception has been replaced by the view that reviews are summative evaluations where schools either pass or fail. And rather than supporting schools to do a good job the ERO are there to "tell them off" and "frighten them back into line." This year's annual report from ERO was seen to reflect this attitude:

> The School Trustees Association is disappointed with the report and claims the review office is once again acting like a policeman, without a friendly word of advice"....In the report, chief review officer Judith Aitken said there was a widespread perception that advice to schools virtually disappeared in 1989 with the advent of *Tomorrow's Schools* reforms. However, that was not the case. (New Zealand Press Association, 1994b, p. 18)

Once again the expectation of trustees being supported by other partners to do their best has turned to "you're on your own" and if you get it wrong "look out" giving the impression that the Ministry of Education and ERO are more concerned with meeting requirements rather than focusing on the needs of the schools.

As well as tasks based on government requirements receiving priority over tasks based on school needs there are also government restrictions on board autonomy to carry out tasks centred around school needs. Many requirements, such as writing policy that the boards can see no need for, limit the amount of time they have for considering school centred tasks, whereas other government requirements limit the range of solutions that

boards may use. The most significant government restriction on board autonomy is acknowledged at all levels as being a financial:

> It all boils down to funds doesn't it really? (Delta, July 1991)

> I think you're right Bruce, I think that's the way we look at it, that was our income. We want to put 15 000 ($) aside, let's see if we can bridge the gap through fundraising.
>
> Yeah.
>
> Or else, it will cost someone else, cause, you know, we've got to live within our limits. We can't end up ten years down the line, and they find that they've only got 40 000 in kitty to paint the building, and it's costing you know, eighty.
>
> (Delta, July 1991)

> We are certainly prepared to meet the challenge of competition [contestability of funding], but we also have to ensure we continue to provide services to children. (District manager after hearing the Special Education Service was to have further reductions to funding. (Lawson, 1991f))

> I am not able to pay out to schools more money than has been voted. The pool of money is the same but, based on the roll projections for next year, it has to be spread over more pupils. (Minister of Education accounting for funding cuts. (New Zealand Press Association, 1990c))

The constraint of money seems to be accepted but the idea of funding cuts is interpreted as a reduction in support even if the Minister of Education likes to refer to them as 'savings'. While they may represent savings to the minister they cannot be seen as a saving for the trustees in any way.

The boards' ability to focus on tasks relating to school needs are competing with tasks based on directive government requirements. But it is not just a matter of either school centred tasks competing with government centred tasks as many of the school centred tasks are constrained by government restrictions which limit the range of solutions they can chose from. So an activity like bulk funding of teacher salaries is seen as a government centred task of administration as well as possibly placing restrictions on how boards may resolve school needs when it is framed within a context of budgetary constraint.

Governance - Effectiveness by desire

The four themes of structure, support, shared responsibility and school needs are very interrelated within the conceptualising that trustees use to make sense of their roles as governors of schools. Their responses on a range of issues indicate the importance of these themes in defining the very reason for why they believe boards have been created - to govern. Parents become trustees out of their desire to have input into their children's education. It is this desire that gives parents the competence and ability to make the right decisions on behalf of their children:

> [I]ndividual competence assumes that most people are competent to carry out the tasks given to them and that nearly everyone will have a genuine commitment to doing the best job possible for all learners. The presumption of individual competence encourages the development of initiative, independence, personal responsibility and entrepreneurial abilities....The concept of competence also extends to parents. We feel that parents want to be involved more fully in various facets of the education of their children and the overall direction of our proposal is to encourage this. (Taskforce to Review Educational Administration, 1988, p. 4)

The evidence of the desire to participate can be seen in the amount of energy and time expended by parents via their involvement in the boards of trustees. Whether their specific interests are the same or reflect a range of possible reasons to participate is more difficult to discern.

Having made the commitment to participate and receiving the communities approval through due democratic process the trustees find out that they have to work out for themselves what it means to govern a school. But what school governance means for each trustee will be determined by the way the four themes above have come together. Their expectations create ideals of what and how they want to achieve it - working through the unknown and establishing some sort of reality for their school. Maybe this represents autonomy in practice but as each trustee realises there are many factors that impact on that autonomy. As each board works through a focal concern it has to: make sense of what might appear ordered or chaotic; find out who can help or what resources are available to draw on to work through an issue; find out who else is involved in the issue and what position they are taking on the matter; and

decide in what way the focal concerns relate to their ability to meet the school's needs. The focal concerns described in the preceding chapters arise in different ways. They may derive from the Ministry, the STA, within the community from parents and 'others', within the school from staff and less often pupils, or emerge from the boards themselves. Most boards would appear to be reacting to the focal concerns as they are 'presented' while a few others will seek them out in the belief that the working through them will lead to "improved education for the children". One principal described this as being "proactive rather than reactive" [field notes, April 1991]. This involves establishing what the schools' needs are and looking for opportunities to meet them. Beta's and Delta's consideration of recapitation is an example of this.

The idea of governance being driven by individual trustee's desire to see that their children get the best education possible may be contrasted with an opposing proposition. When the trustees find they are using energy to meet government requirements rather than school needs, that rather than participating in a partnership they are directed upon how to act, and there is little support to establish their autonomy but rather find themselves unsupported in their attempts to "get things done", then they have become administrators. The administration becomes means driven rather than focusing of the ends - schools needs as the trustees perceive them to be. Furthermore the administration is seen as forced upon the boards by the central authorities, such as the Minister and Ministry of Education, and the external aim appears to be overly concerned with efficiency - "making savings". The result is a decrease in autonomy, an increase in paper work and schools' needs not being met. For many this is what bulk funding represented. For these reasons I have decided to call this outcome efficiency by constraint - that is constraining a board's autonomy to meet the school's needs as it perceives them. This formulation can be represented graphically as shown in Figure 2.

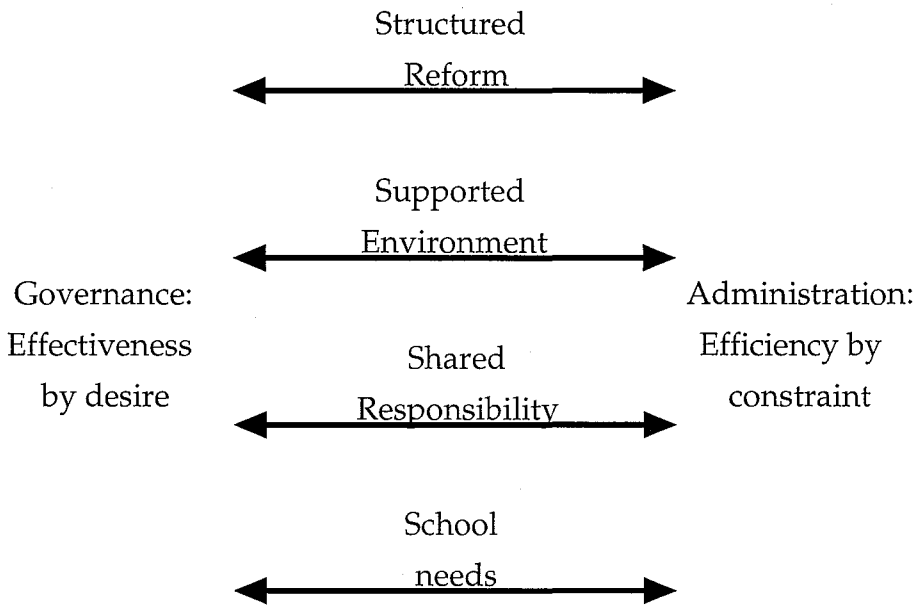

Figure 2 Model Representing Themes Central to Trustee Governance

At this stage the model can be considered as still under development. While the themes are very interrelated the model does not make clear what effect each has on the other in determining the final outcome on the governance - administration continuum.

The model attempts to express trustees expectations about ideal governance but in each board, if they were to achieve *their* ideal, it may actually result in different outcomes in terms of the way they govern. It is also a matter of interpretation as to when the ideal is reached as the development of the model was phenomenological. Hence this might be considered by asking how much autonomy does a board need to govern? That there were a surprising number of similarities between the boards in their discussion of focal concerns suggests that the boards would share very similar views about what constitutes ideal governance but external factors such as rising or falling rolls can soon see variations introduced. Within the model there is still 'space' for political struggles over how each of the themes is defined operationally and by whom. Examples may include what constitutes a satisfactory partnership with other interested parties, what are the best forms of support to maximise a boards autonomy and most importantly what are the school's needs.

If the ideal situation was to be reached the trustees feel that they would be in a position to put their creative energies behind a system that facilitates the development of positive outcomes rather than absorbs these energies through the more trivial demands of administration:

> I was expecting the board to be more child centred and I don't mean working with children. I don't think the children got a mention in the first three years. (Epsilon trustee, June 1994)
>
> With all the energy going into dealing with these problems [a reference to maintenance and resourcing] there is little left for putting into the children. (Beta trustee, February 1994)

Summary

A model of trustee governance is emerging and important developments can now be made by integrating the results of this study with the findings from other research to see if the model is supported and / or whether refinements need to be made in the light of other literature's findings such as other prominent features of administration that have not been included in the model.

Chapter 8

Thematic Integration with Other New Zealand Findings

Having presented the results of the study in the previous chapters it is now appropriate to revisit the New Zealand research findings that were reviewed in chapter 1 in order to determine the relevancy of the themes identified by this study. This will then provide the basis for making a more detailed evaluation of the model presented above, which will be presented in the concluding chapter.

As I witnessed groups of people coming to understand reform I was also aware that it has been witnessed before:

> All real change involves "passing through the zones of uncertainty...the situation of being at sea, of being lost, of confronting more information the one can handle". (Schon cited in Fullan, 1991, pp. 31-32)

This study has attempted to elaborate on people's subjective meanings of change and at the same time has attempted to show how these are shared with people involved in school administration and how they may even clash with the subjective views of others. The coming together of these subjective interpretations create their own objective realities which contribute to further change. The question can now be asked about whether the subjective meanings of change observed in this study are shared with previous research (see chapter 1).

Structured Reform

In chapter six this theme was used to refer to the trustees' belief that the reforms were going to be implemented following a coherent plan controlled by the central authorities. This was not to be the case as other research also found out.

One of the ideas often repeated in the other studies was that the changes were too rushed (Hall & McGee, 1991; McGee, Keown, & Oliver, 1993). This was nicely echoed in the current study with a hint of irony when one trustee was asked what further changes would she like to see made she

responded "My first thoughts are no more changes" (trustee, February 1994). Wylie (1991) also reports this as being the most frequently requested form of change in the surveys she conducted in primary schools. The rate of change seemed to be working to someone else's timetable that appeared irrational, inefficient and alienating and which seemed to defeat the whole purpose of the change to begin with - the achievement of a delegated efficient education system supporting effective outcomes:

> Effective management practices are lacking and the information needed by people in all parts of the system to make informed choices is seldom available. The result is that almost everyone feels powerless to change things they see need changing. To make progress, radical change is needed. (Taskforce to Review Educational Administration, 1988, p. xi)

One might suspect that people are no better off with the new educational system and that radical change was still needed. The thought that this might happen would just add to the uncertainty that people are wanting to avoid. Not that uncertainty is not a feature of change but the thought that someone else is taking care of it, or acknowledging problems in order to rectify them would be sufficient to suggest that the reform is structured (rational) enough to cope with such difficulties. This was reflected as an expectation of change in relation to charter development:

> This was interpreted by many trustees to mean that the tasks of trustees, such as charter development had been carefully thought through and that trustees would be told explicitly what to do and how to do it. In reality, no one was experienced in the task as it had never been undertaken before .... (Hall & McGee, 1991, p. 10)

This is the same type of expectation that trustees in this study expressed. The expectation that the reforms would be structured in such a way that even if the trustees did not know what was happening someone else did and would be able to provide support. Because the support was not being provided as expected support was being found between schools through local clusters. Over time, as one trustee in this study said, "the boards of trustees have learnt to be independent" as a matter of necessity. The possibility that someone may have planned it this way as an intended outcome would make a good debate but implies an abuse of the goodwill

of trustees in order to achieve the outcome - a matter of 'having to be cruel to be kind'. Even if this was not the intended outcome some trustees were still referring to their school "surviving" the changes as if there were some doubt that they would endure the reforms. The survival is often attributed to the professionalism of the principal and staff (McGee, Keown, & Oliver, 1993; Wylie, 1991).

Concerns that the reforms were not as structured as people would have liked had arisen from the start when returning officers at schools were organising the first board elections (Harold & McConnell, 1990). These included inadequate information "to give a clear idea of the collective and individual roles of the board of trustees" (p. 4). Some of the material received was late or contradictory giving the impression "that the new system was being pushed too fast and no-one knows what is what" (p. 4).

Again, later on when schools were involved in charter development the MTSP Team (Hall & McGee, 1991) maintained that in terms of educational change there were inadequate resources for the exercise so that successful change was unlikely. Their suggestion was for more piloting to eliminate pitfalls and develop materials and training packages that would have made the whole process more structured and less uncertain. They themselves draw on literature which suggests that five factors are critical to the success of educational innovation which is reconfirmed in this study and supports the model emerging in the current study. The factors are:

(i) there is a perceived need for change by those involved;
(ii) there is the opportunity to participate in decisions about change;
(iii) the change is following an explicit plan;
(iv) resources are provided to support the changes; and
(v) those involved in the change are supported throughout the period.

The need for change can already be assumed as people would not have become trustees without it. The lead up to the changeover saw a lot of media material that positioned the trustees as having a position of control over the changes that were about to take place. They would be taking control of their local educational institution and be involved in decision-making. However, that control was taken away when changes were unilaterally made to the charters without consultation. What soon became

evident in both previous work and the present study was that if there was a plan not every one knew about it as the variation in advice received, and knowledge about what was happening from people expected to know, was contradictory. As mentioned above more trials would have allowed for better resourcing in terms of materials for trustees to draw on and provided some experience for the leaders of change in the Ministry of Education. Lastly, as change appeared too rushed and those expected to be knowledgeable were not, then any appearance of a structured reform was lost.

The same experiences recorded by the MTSP Team (Hall & McGee, 1991) in regard to charter development were being repeated in the current study in the trustees' development of their property occupancy document. And the same reasons for the limited success of the charter development apply in the development of the PODs. These tasks were completed, fulfilling the necessary criteria, but from the view of trustees the whole process was alienating the trustees from the central authorities who were their supposed partners. Hall and McGee (1991) believe that the disruption to the Education Department as it was restructured and renamed as the Ministry of Education was significant in withdrawing the support of the very personnel that could have overseen the successful facilitation of charter development.

The studies reviewed previously (see chapter 1) also gave examples of their participants finding the reforms lacking certainty. There was no direct evidence of the game metaphor involving the changing of rules as found in the current study but there were references that implied the same annoyance with the Ministry and Minister of Education.

One of the features of the reforms creating uncertainty was the lack of information:

> Initially the information came in dribs and drabs and there was no plan of direction, no cohesiveness. We often learned things from the newspaper first. If the community is to have its say, it is a good thing but there must be the information available to make informed decisions. (McConnell & Jefferies, 1991, p. 7)

The references to a lack of information both in the present study and in others indicates the failure of the reforms and if this becomes a feature of the new environment then it actually negates the possibility of an open and responsive system, one of the eight central features of the new administrative structure as set out in the *Picot Report* (Taskforce to Review Educational Administration, 1988):

> An open system is one in which there are good information flows, and in which information on which to base decisions is available to everyone - consumers and providers alike. For those working in the system, good information flows are a prerequisite to efficient and effective performance. (p. 43)

There were also examples of reforms undergoing reform. The MTSP recalls how in relation to charter development there had been a lot of effort expended for little positive recognition and in many cases charters had to be altered to meet Ministry requirements (Hall & McGee, 1991). Then after all their hard work the ERO review process was changed with

> the charter no longer providing the framework for the school review. Consequently, the role of the charter and the accountability of the school for the attainment of charter goals and objectives is now (August 1991) seen by schools as being uncertain. (Hall & McGee, 1991, p. 46)

Thus full closure on charter and policy development was not going to be known for some schools until after their first term in office. One of the schools in the present study did not receive a review until the beginning of 1993, a year after the board's second set of trustee elections. As will be discussed later, until the first review, the boards and schools had no feedback as to whether they were on the 'right track' or not. One of the schools in Gordon et al.'s (1994) study took the deliberate approach of not complying with national regulations unless they were judged to be in the best interests of the school thus minimising the amount of work the board had to cope with.

There was agreement that there were positive aspects about the reforms because of the immediacy and flexibility of the new system. In particular comments about finance indicate a preference for the changes whereby needs are met more immediately and efficiently (McConnell & Jefferies, 1991). There were also reports that the staff were finding this to their

advantage in getting the resources they require as was found in the present study. Thus there were elements of certainty that was an improvement on the old system and people with experience of both could identify these:

> The increased flexibility of the bulk funding operational grant is good. The uncertainty of what is going to happen is stressful....The formalisation of procedures and policies is timely, if exhausting. (Barrington, 1992, p. 21)

This is similar to Beta's principal who prefers the new system to the old because more of the procedures are made explicit and so people are able to make recourse to them to back up claims rather than being at the 'mercy' of the former education board:

> In the new system mistakes are made for myself. In the old system you didn't know they were being made and so you were at the mercy of other people's opinions and expertise. Now there are a set of rules. Previously people made the rules as it suited them. But now we can challenge people on the basis of the POD et cetera. (Beta trustee, February 1994)

So if this person is correct uncertainty was excited in the old system because there were no rules that were in evidence. The result was that 'you would not know if anyone was coming up from behind you', whereas now there are more rules inherent in the system from the 'formalisation of procedure and policy' and the only problem is getting people to adhere to them. One example is the POD which outlines who has responsibility for what parts of the school property. Prior to the changes, getting action on maintenance has been described as uncertain, so that in the current study Delta trustees felt more confident about getting the Ministry to take responsibility for replacing the roof on a building than they would have previously. Likewise Beta's principal felt more confident about getting a deficient maintenance job redone by the Ministry because of the accountability formalised in the POD. Comments have been made, in the current study and others, about the inability of the Ministry people to listen and negotiate which is seen as a continuation of the old system.

The formalisation of procedure and policy has made explicit the lines of responsibility and accountability. Many examples of 'changing the rules' described in this study may well represent a strategy of the people in the

old system transferring the "old rules" to the new administration. If the changes are being rushed through then Ministry personnel are more likely to revert to old strategies when under pressure. The alternative suggestion expressed by Gordon et al. (1993) was that the Ministry would change rules because of its own agenda. The end result is that the boards are critical of the Ministry and Minister of Education:

> There should be certain guidelines put out at the start rather than altered or over-ridden later. As long as you follow that, then they shouldn't be over-ridden. (primary school teacher)
>
> What is the point of having a board of trustees when the Ministry can just turn around and change it just like that...I think that defeats the purpose of *Tomorrow's Schools.* (bilingual teacher) (Mansell, 1992, pp. 22-23)
>
> Now they [Ministry] are the servants first of the Minister, and that's very true, they are. Our dealings with them are usually poor, invariably we get very little response from them which is a complete mind shift from pre 1989 where they were a responsive group in many ways. So I've very little time for the Ministry, I see them as people who put up as much red tape as possible. (Gordon et al., 1993, pp. 88-89)

I have not found explicit references in the earlier research that suggested trustees were using a game metaphor of changing the rules. But what is apparent in this studies data is the connection between the old system, which was uncertain, and the new system, which while having procedures formalised is now suffering because the procedures are not being adhered to by the Ministry, or in some cases by the schools. It may also be the case that the hurried pace of change for the new Ministry has also contributed to the now underlying judgement of them as "being 'dithery' or 'narrow minded' and rigid and/or unsupportive" (Keown, McGee, & Oliver, 1992, p. 16); and/or they are deliberately hindering boards' work because of their own agenda (Gordon et al., 1993).

Supported Environment

As mentioned above people were identifying the process of making explicit the lines of accountability in the new environment as an improvement. This was not only in maintenance and capital works but extended to responsibilities in teaching and learning as will be described later in this chapter. This provided the basis for trustees to develop their

roles in school governance. The problem as identified by trustees was that they needed to be supported in achieving this goal. As was shown in the previous chapter governance is about autonomy and independence but not about being left "on your own" without the necessary human and financial resources:

> Autonomy is fine if you have real power and sufficient resources. Generally we are expected to do more with the same funding; that is, you can only achieve something worthwhile at the expense of something else.
>
> There are no longer many people in the Ministry who are knowledgeable in areas where schools need to seek advice. Far too much is spent centrally on glossy publications when the money would be more useful in the schools.
>
> (McGee, Keown, & Oliver, 1993, p. 69):

or having external agencies make the trustees' task more difficult:

> Whereas the Ministry, all they do is feed us guff. It just seems to be a paper machine that's feeding out bits and pieces which I think a lot of times goes over our head. Because basically the Ministry's off-loaded everything onto us anyway. (Gordon et al., 1993, p. 88)

So for some people the new Ministry was unable to support schools whereas others felt they did not want to support schools:

> The whole exercise was forced through far too quickly. The policy people in Wellington have never been prepared to consult or listen and this has affected the school in various ways, for example reduced general maintenance funds, new rules for relief teachers, a general lack of understanding of how a secondary school operates.
>
> The Ministry exists as a tool of the Treasury in my opinion and this is exemplified by [name of Ministry person] verbal statement - I wish it was in writing - 'We are not here to help schools.' That from a person in probable daily contact with the Minister.
>
> (McGee, Keown, & Oliver, 1993, p. 69)

Both principals and trustees from the MTSP national secondary schools' survey reported that the system was better in the second year as opposed to the first. Comments from trustees indicate a feeling of team work between staff, trustees and parents. The negative comments from trustees refer to the perception that change was being implemented for the sake of

change. The delays in getting certain things done because of central control. Control by the centre is still seen as bureaucratic in terms of deferred maintenance and capital works. The Ministry sends out requests for information that cannot be gathered in the time frame requested. Resolving overcrowding is one area where the boards will take initiatives because the Ministry is too slow. Class size was reported in the current study as a concern for two schools that had growing rolls. Wylie (1992a) found a similar concern in her survey of primary schools which pointed to particular concerns once classes reached more than 25 students. This has recently become of concern in Auckland where overcrowding is attracting attention. Unless new schools are built those schools in areas with more pupils than places are faced with increasing class sizes. One alternative is for schools to 'seek radical changes' in conventional schooling to resolve the problem (New Zealand Press Association, 1995a, p. 2). The article even drew implicit support from a Ministry official. The response from the Auckland Primary Principals Association was:

> Let's put it back in the Government's court and say, "If there's two new schools needed in Eden, build them. And if that means more money find it". (New Zealand Press Association, 1995b, p. 2)

The government was in the process of building new schools and new buildings in overcrowded schools. The difficulty for the schools is finding solutions that meet the immediate demands that are made on them. New buildings take time and as someone was quoted as saying earlier 'the Ministry wheels turn slowly'. This puts the pressure on boards to take responsibility for such problems when they may legitimately be those of the Ministry.

Despite the difficulties reported, the MTSP Team (McConnell & Jefferies, 1991) found many of the trustees were positive about the changes and hopeful for the future, but with reservations:

> I have positive views - due to the change in terms of philosophy, but it has been too hasty. There has been too much passing of responsibility without preparation.... Overall, education will benefit from the changes for the better. (p. 4)

One point evident here that has not been considered thus far in this study is that trustees were prepared for planned changing of responsibilities.

That is, they believed that the responsibilities given to boards would be sequenced and supported and that the next responsibility would not be received until the previous one was assimilated to the boards' pattern of governance. Trustees have shown their enthusiasm for change by expending much energy on the many tasks assigned to them but they are aware of their limits. I am confident that bulk funding of teaching salaries would have been accepted as a responsibility of the boards had prior changes been more successful in terms of their structure and support. As mentioned previously in this study the trustees felt the government was abusing the goodwill of the trustees' roles as volunteers.

This reflects another tension about the relationship that boards have with the central authority and can be accounted for by using McGregor's X Theory and Y Theory (Rainey, 1993). The tension is expressed by the board's enthusiasm and willingness to become involved, yet instead of treating the situation as requiring McGregor's Y theory of leadership, the Ministry has tended to treat boards as though they were more unwilling partners in the enterprise and therefore requiring change to be imposed, which follows McGregor's X theory of leadership. Boston (1991) helps explain this outcome as he describes the dominance of public choice theory and agency theory in current public sector restructuring in New Zealand. The relationship of principal and agent, which in education is mirrored by the Ministry of Education and boards, in agency theory assumes that each party has competing interests:

> A good deal of agency theory, therefore, focuses on finding the most satisfactory way of negotiating, writing and monitoring contracts so as to minimise the likelihood of violations resulting from opportunism on the part of the agent (e.g. due to shirking, deception, cheating, and collusion). Interestingly, despite the fact that principals are also thought to be opportunistic, agency theorists have paid little attention to this side of the problem. (Boston, 1991, p. 5)

These notions then, run counter to the idea of volunteers working in collaboration with the government as equal partners in the running of schools and is more likely to result in change being imposed rather than agreed upon by consensus. The Ministry of Education is itself an agent in the greater scheme of things whereby it has relationships with other

'controlling' principals such as the Minister of Education, the Treasury and State Services Commission although the links with these last two are not as explicit. The Treasury's interest in education was expressed in the publication (Treasury, 1987) which came out prior to the setting up of the Picot Group and may suggest an external influence in its development (Codd, 1990).

The language of agency theory has been encapsulated in the corporate plans and annual reports that agents provide to show they are meeting their commitments. Likewise the Minister of Education is also an agent and must compete with other agents when it comes to 'slicing up the national expenditure pie' which provides the limits within which the Minister can then work to fulfil his own goals within education. And lastly the government is in some ways an agent to the electorate as principal. The relationship between principal and agent are not quite as clear at this point as others are and may indicate why there is more leeway in what the government as agent can get away with between elections.

At a time of fiscal crisis in state expenditure as explained by Offe (1984) the series of principals and agents creates a line of devolved responsibility which shifts the consequent legitimation crisis[42] down to the last agent. If the "economic recovery", now being hailed as having arrived, is a reality then the fiscal crisis anticipated may be averted. The boards are now expecting the first increase in their operational grant since 1989 and whether it is sufficient to meet "real" needs is probably not as important as its potential to change the perception of trustees that things are not going to get worse and that they may even continue to improve. In the meantime, however, Codd (1990) believes the change from conjunctural policy making to structural policy making means that there will be no going back to the educational administration of the past.

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[42] The term 'legitimation crisis' used by Offe (1984) refers to the difficulty faced by the state when it institutes policy which a significant part of the electorate disagrees with, yet the state requires that same electorate to continue supporting the state come the next election. The problem for the state is legitimating policy that the voters find antithetical.

This may mean that the legitimation crisis due to lowering state expenditure may be averted for the short to medium term period but the new structural relationships will remain. The boards will continue to attempt to collaborate with a Ministry of Education that is treated as, and treats others as, an agent. This creates the tension which pushes the boards toward what they consider a role of administration on behalf of the government rather than moving toward governance on behalf of the community and children with the support of the Ministry. Note that the community does not enter into a strict principal - agent relationship with the board, as it would be difficult for a notional group to organise in order to provide incentives and sanctions as well as monitor its agent (the board), all important features of the principal - agent relationship. The board is the last agent in the line of devolution except for the possibility of the staff, another group that is meant to be an equal partner in the system. The difficulties with this relationship will be considered later.

One might question how long the trustees will continue to work with the enthusiasm they do under these circumstances. As long as there is a group of people in the school community who can work through a three year period with the hope that they can make a difference, this should be sufficient to maintain the system. The findings of this study pointed to the likelihood that the boards will become more independent of the centre - a view which was reported in other studies as well:

> Basically I am still very positive - if I can keep the admin side under control. The Ministry and SES have got to develop clear procedures *or get out of the way and let us do it.* [Italics mine] There is too much contradiction - they have no sense of direction of schools. (McConnell & Jefferies, 1991, p. 5)

In this case, however, the principal would prefer the central agencies to remove themselves from the environment rather than have them obstruct the boards in their work. This was an idea also raised by some board members in the current study. The government would no longer be an equal partner but rather set the limits within which the boards could work. This is the idea behind the term self-management which seems to be the term used by the Minister to refer to what boards would be doing if they were to accept such responsibilities as the bulk funding of teachers' salaries (Caldwell, 1989; Ministry of Education, 1991; New Zealand Press

Association, 1991d, p. 4). This can be slightly confusing given the boards of trustees' role of governance and the importance of conceptualising it as something different from management. As will be discussed later the concept of management and governance seems to be synonymous for many trustees as Gordon et al. (1994) demonstrated.

It could be said that if the central agencies do remove themselves then this leaves education "up for grabs" in some respects with the question left open of whether communities can do it on their own. Privatisation as a policy has occurred in the health sector with the passing of some provincial and rural hospitals over to their local communities. The boards who feel that the Ministry and other central agencies create more problems than they solve may feel that they would be better off to 'go it alone' (McConnell & Jefferies, 1991). This is unlikely to happen as there is plenty of evidence to suggest that the principal - agent relationship will be difficult to establish right throughout the school system. Furthermore there are sections of the New Zealand community who want the state to retain a more explicit degree of control over schools in order to maintain standards that all children should meet before they leave school (Snook, 1990), hence the renewed interest in the National Curriculum and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority since the Bolger Government has come to power.

If boards are given the independence they desire then the centre will no longer have the control *they* wish to retain. This will maintain and set in place the tension between governance and administration for the boards. Many of the trustees in the MTSP feel that the state does have a role to play in education and would not want them to withdraw from the environment especially in terms of setting curriculum and maintaining standards (Mansell, 1992). If the only control the government wished to maintain was over the curriculum then the boards would not be dissatisfied, as it is not something that many trustees believe is their responsibility but rather is within the province of the teachers and principal. But it is the control of inputs, a feature of structural policy, that requires the centre to have so much more control (Codd, Gordon, & Harker, 1990).

This is reflected in one of the areas which had been supported centrally prior to and during the changes - i.e. the education of children with special needs. The shifting of funding to schools was a point of confusion as the schools were not told how much money they were receiving for each child. In the current study this was expressed by one principal, in making reference to the operational grant, as "this is all the thing that under *Tomorrow's Schools* has just gone wishy washy, it's just in there somewhere" (Alpha, July 1991). Funding for children via the SES was reduced centrally without any increase in the schools' operations grant. This amounted to a 'cut' in funding and a reduction in support for those children. This had occurred just after they had received the right to an education in a mainstream school (Ballard, 1992). The MTSP Team (McConnell & Jefferies, 1991) found support for this view in their own research where trustees said they wanted funding tagged, arguing that resource allocation should not be decreased, and that special education funds should be distributed equitably.

The Special Education Service was one agency that the schools did not want to see removed or diminished as it was central to providing the support that schools and teachers required to meet the needs of children with disabilities. Ballard warns that the recent changes, in 1992, to funding children on the basis of categories in which they are placed, is limiting in meeting children's needs and that the only reason for using eligibility criteria for placing children in categories is to exclude children from access to resources (Ballard, 1992). This reflects a structural policy approach of limiting inputs into the educational system. Note that while there were reports that the SES was not providing the support that schools wished, people were attributing this to underfunding and the increased casework of staff (Gordon, Boyask, & Pearce, 1994; Sullivan, 1992; Wylie, 1991) rather than blaming the organisation as they tend to do the Ministry. What is important here is that, as Gordon et al. (1994) recognise, a 'dislike' for the Ministry is not the result of schools thinking it is preventing them from having more autonomy but rather for not providing the support to boards for the difficult task they have been given or, worse, being a hindrance. In this case the Special Education Service is seen to be in the same position as the boards of trustees.

Despite all the negative aspects of the changes people were finding the experiences rewarding. "I've enjoyed it. It has been good for me... in gaining confidences" (McConnell & Jefferies, 1991, p. 9). This was important because in 1992 new elections were to be held and there was some worry about whether there would be enough willing volunteers to stand for vacated positions. In the current study only two schools, Beta and Gamma, did not need to have elections, both finding two replacements for retiring trustees. Alpha, Delta and Epsilon held elections and saw two, three and three new trustees elected respectively.

Shared Responsibility

In the previous chapter the theme of shared responsibility was developed around expectations that people had of the differing roles in the new administrative environment. With each role there were associated responsibilities and obligations. As has already been shown in the previous section when a group does not fulfil those expectations then it implies the group is failing to support the partnership. As in chapter seven this theme is characterised by ambiguity which each board attempted to clarify as it developed relationships with other groups.

The board - Ministry relationship

As noted earlier the charter was to symbolise the partnership between the interested parties that were about to come together to reform educational administration for the better. One of the revealing questions, in terms of roles and responsibilities, was put to interviewees in the MTSP (Mansell, 1992). People were asked under what circumstances should the government be allowed to alter the charter. Two-thirds of principals thought this should be allowed in certain circumstances. For some it was a matter of negotiation, and change was only reasonable if a charter did not meet national guidelines. Some justified this on the basis that the state pays for education and so has a right as part of its role as funder. Others believed that the government's responsibility to maintain standards meant that it was reasonable for the Minister to have this prerogative. Some did not:

> No. Once that happens you lose your autonomy. Most schools are conservative now and are not going to let radicals overtake the school. (Mansell, 1992, p. 22)

Of importance here is the sense of loss of autonomy, that which turns governance into administration. If autonomy is removed then trustees have no purpose for taking on the task because they are then only in a position of being administrators for the Ministry, which as previously contended, is not valued by trustees. This also destroys any sense of an equal partnership and while the state is considered to have an obligation to uphold national guidelines and ensure that funds are used appropriately they are also obliged to treat the boards with the respect an 'equal' partner deserves. So it is not necessarily changes to the content that are at issue but rather how they are made:

> I'd prefer the community forum do it rather than the Minister, even though it's cumbersome. If it's going to mean something to people in their communities, it must be changed after consultation. (primary school principal)
>
> But I'm distinctly uncomfortable with altering what has resulted from community consultation. Charters are important, but much of the real power resides in Wellington. (secondary school principal)
>
> (Mansell, 1992, p. 22)

The changes that were made actually changed the nature of the relationship explicitly and revealed that the partnership was not equal and highlighted the reality that the Ministry was likely to alter its own responsibilities to the other parties without consultation. This must have seemed rather ironic after the emphasis the Ministry placed on consultation *and* consensus (Department of Education, 1989).

For many it was just frustrating that the government would change the nature of the partnership without consultation and without building consensus on the matter:

> Changes such as these reinforced impressions of official dithering, even political manipulation, on the part of those directing the charter development process. (Hall & McGee, 1991, p. 44)

The expectation that there was to be a collaboration between partners in bringing about the reforms was not met and in response to the changes some schools were considering the option of refusing to sign. However, the Ministry having the advantage of power was able persuade the schools otherwise on the basis that it might jeopardise funding. It would

appear that the Ministry has won an important battle but at the same time the distrust and cynicism encouraged by this strategy would make it difficult to "win the war". The shifting of the Ministry from partner to the enemy so early on reinforced previously mentioned conceptions that the boards will be in a continual struggle to resolve the tension of serving the community as well as the government:

> The Ministry of Education is still telling the board what to do. I envisaged the Ministry more in a guidance role - not when to do it and how to do it. However at this school I think it will work. (McConnell & Jefferies, 1991, p. 8)
>
> Writing the charter was an achievement. Fighting the Ministry about it. The final signing was a good thing - a good community involvement and feeling. (McConnell & Jefferies, 1991, p. 11)

There were some other notable ideas within the expressions from the parent trustees in the interviews who did not believe the charters should be 'over-ridden' by the Minister:

> No! especially when we worked so hard at it! (primary school trustee)
>
> No. The charter is the work of the staff and community. For the Ministry to over-ride this is a put-down to those who did the hard work. (intermediate school trustee)
>
> Yes, as long as they do it for the right reasons. We need to prevent nonsense getting into some charters. (secondary school trustee)
>
> (Mansell, 1992, pp. 23-24)

An interesting conceptualisation in the first two quotes is that the work was done by the boards and the community and therefore it is their charter, a charter between a board and a community rather than between the government, a school and a community. Those who did think it allowable on occasion for the Ministry or Minister to change the charter thought so because it reflected the responsibilities of the Ministry's involvement in the charter. The last comment seems to ignore the fact that all parties should be happy with the charter before it is signed so that any 'nonsense' should be eliminated as part of the negotiation process. Now if this person thought that the charter was between the board and the community then this may account for this understanding. These conceptualisations may have arisen because the government or Ministry

was not party to the negotiations that took place. As mentioned in chapter seven consultation is about interaction and the Ministry was absent from the face to face consultation that took place in local communities. It was only when a board, 'community' and staff were satisfied with the charter that it would proceed to the Ministry who would sign it or send it back to the school for further changes to be made. As noted earlier the time frame for charter development was so short that trustees were under such pressure just to consult on the few sections of the charter for which they were responsible that maybe they did not notice the Ministry had already had a large input in constructing the charters. Seven eighths of the charter was not based on consultation between boards and the Ministry but was already centrally prescribed. Thus the discourse about the charter was being exposed as rhetoric and I believe firmly destroyed any notions of equal partnership and trust of the Ministry:

> Trustees of the intermediate school felt the board's input was too limited and not what the television advertisements had led them to believe the charters were about. (Hall & McGee, 1991, p. 12)

There is room yet for further research on how the charters are conceptualised especially in terms of ownership. If one looks at the signatories on the charter a Ministry official will sign on behalf of the Minister and the chairperson signs on behalf of the school, board and community. However, from the perspective of the trustees it is not as much a government - board charter as the community's charter and in that respect signifying the partnership. This very idea of partnership as expressed earlier would have supported a negotiated change to charters rather than imposed change. There is also a reported difference between secondary and primary school boards as to the impact. The changes were seen as interference by many of the secondary trustees, whereas primary trustees were more accepting of the idea of changes if it was fulfilling the state's responsibility for maintaining standards of fairness.

The board - community relationship

In terms of the boards' responsibilities the task of consultation presented itself as a large and time consuming process. This was found to be the case in this study and reported in other literature. One of the outcomes of rushing to get the charters developed was a tendency to restrict the

operational definition of community to the parents of students at a school although the secondary school boards were seen to consult more widely (Hall & McGee, 1991).

As with the development of charters many of the forms of consultation became less effective as time went on (Gordon, Boyask, & Pearce, 1994; Hall & McGee, 1991). This finding was repeated in the current study with boards finding it difficult to maintain interest in the community to participate in the development of school policy documents. Not that this was always a problem as one board saw it as a sign that the parents were happy with the way the board was handling policy development and this gave them the opportunity to get on with the job. This was an interpretation identified by the MTSP Team (Hall & McGee, 1991), but more often in the schools who resented the process, whereas in the current study it was used to rationalise lack of parent interest. There were reports that over time parent participation had decreased over the first year (McConnell & Jefferies, 1991).

The MTSP Team (Hall & McGee, 1991) had reported that during charter development the boards could be characterised as using levels 3-5 of Ramsay et al's.'(1993) consultation schema[43], whereas the schools in the present study were using levels 1-4 for consultation during policy development. Because of the 'lack of interest' shown by parents consultation, in the main, became a matter of informing people of what was happening (level 1) and, for those who wanted it, providing opportunities for taking part (level 4). Like Gordon et al. (1994) it was the policies that involved issues of some importance to the parents that drew the most input.

For the Gamma board, providing opportunities for taking part has been reduced, probably 'after little interest has been shown'. Ramsay et al. (1993) challenge the interpretation that because people are not taking the

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[43]This means that parents will be involved in planning and evaluating the charter as it is developed. The same MTSP report found that once charters were developed they did not become significant documents in the boards' governance activities. Thus evaluation of the charters themselves was not undertaken.

opportunities provided they therefore lack interest or are apathetic. They found many reasons preventing people, who did want to be involved, from participating in school consultation activities. Many who did not want to take part did want to be kept informed. Another group was made up of those who were 'afraid' of teachers and had a dislike of schools. The problem for boards who are not providing opportunities would arise if the board is asked to show how they have consulted the community in policy development. This was a concern for Beta but as they found out after their review if they had not consulted their community it would not have been a concern to ERO.

The end result is that in general the boards act on the basis of representation rather than through constant consultation. Each board will adopt variations to reflect any demands made upon it by the 'school community' so that a compromise between consultation and representation is found; Epsilon with its use of surveys on more controversial issues, Alpha with its Maori parents' group, or Beta with its liaison people for particular cultures in the school locality. However, if the schools find that ERO is not concerned about its community consultation no doubt the compromise will move in favour of community representation given the time and energy required to consult a notional community. Another aspect of representation, as found in the current study and the MTSP study (Harold, 1992) was that in some schools the teachers were becoming a major contact in communicating with parents. Thus it may be that the teachers have a more representative idea about the concerns of parents than trustees.

Interestingly, despite what trustees thought they might be achieving, it was the students and non-trustee parents who thought that there had been little change two years into the reforms (McGee, Keown, & Oliver, 1993). I would hypothesise that for the students their views reflect the stability of the classroom during change and for the parents I would hypothesise that the reforms have not changed "significantly", as far as parents are concerned, the relationship between parents and schools. One of the important issues to consider is that the reforms were to give parents 'opportunities' and many comments have been collected which indicate that certain parents have taken up those opportunities while others may have chosen to retain the status quo in regard to their relationship with

the school. This then becomes a matter of equity to ensure that all had the opportunity to take part or not. There may be aspects of the system that disenfranchise certain groups. The system of running meetings is a very European way of doing things which, if considered within Bourdieu's theory of social reproduction, would suggest that only those with sufficient cultural capital would be able to participate (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977):

> A board of trustees is a particularly Pakeha, western European institution. It's not easily accessible to people from a different culture who run their own affairs quite differently. So if people don't have the practice in those sort of skills, in the same way I feel uncomfortable and out of place and amateurish in a Maori hui, I don't have the power there, and quite rightly so, but I don't know what's going on in the same way as I do at a board of trustees meeting. (staff trustee) (Gordon, Boyask, & Pearce, 1994, p. 34)

So, it might be expected that certain types of people find themselves on boards or being involved in consultation. A recent report on the composition of boards of trustees show that males are disproportionately represented, as are Maori and European groups while Asians and Pacific Island groups are under-represented (Sturrock, 1994)[44]. While there is a tendency to represent rather than consult, it could not be said that boards are representative. Gordon et al. (1994) elaborated on a range of pressures that were making even equitable representation problematic. This would mean that the responsibility and the benefits for school governance may well not be shared by all those who are stakeholders.

The board - principal, staff relationship

McConnell and Jefferies (1991) report that parent trustees found the principal's and staff's understanding of education (cultural capital) 'intimidating'. They also found trustees initially lacked the experience and background to contribute but, as in this study, trustees were found to gain in confidence as they went along:

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[44]The present study did not have data regarding peoples' backgrounds but in terms of the gender ratio 70 per cent of the trustees were male.

> In reviewing their roles, board members sometimes felt their lack of experience hampered their ability to contribute and this was compounded by their perception in some cases of the dominance in board meetings of teachers and principals whose "professional knowledge can be intimidating", as one board member noted. (p. 30)
>
> ...the other people who are on the committee, there's been a social worker, there's been an ex-principal of [...a special school...], you know, and those people just know so much more than me, you know. And yet I know that my input will be valuable but I feel restrained sometimes... I've just gone on this committee, but I get a bit nervous about sort of looking silly. (parent trustee)
>
> (Gordon, Boyask, & Pearce, 1994, pp. 35-36)

While the boards were busy establishing relationships with their 'community' and external agencies such as the Ministry and the STA another major aspect of the shared responsibility was reflected in the development of the relationships within the boards and within the schools, that is between the principal, the staff and the parent trustees. In particular this has been discussed in the literature as how the boards separate governance and management (Barrington, 1992; Gordon et al., 1994). The emphasis on distinguishing between governance and management was seen as an important operational distinction for the effective running of the schools. The issue was raised early on by the *Today's Schools* Report (Education Reform Implementation Process Team, 1990) and then noted by the Principals' Implementation Taskforce (1990a). As an area of possible conflict charter development was one activity where principals have managed to make use of their knowledge to take a lot of responsibility for governance. There was never likely to be a clear distinction between governance and management for principals as they are full members of the board and have the in depth knowledge of school management that parents lack as well as having the day to day experience of the reforms. The principals' position as organisational and curriculum leader put them in the "driving seat" in most activities within the school. As the chairperson of one board said "Well Patrick, I think we'll leave it in your hands. I mean you know how to run the school better than we do" (Delta, August 1991). At the same time I believe that most if not all the boards would not have been able to cope without the principals input at all levels. The number of times in the current study that trustees had to ask

for information or ask the principal to follow-up on issues meant that they were the central go - between in "interpreting" for other trustees "what was happening" and knowing "how to respond". This was also evident to the MTSP Team (Hall & McGee, 1991) in respect of charter development:

> Within the group of schools where the leadership of charter development lay most clearly with the principal, many principals appeared to consistently encourage initiatives from other trustees. In a sense they appeared 'reluctant leaders'. They gave the impression of wishing to share information and to include others in decision-making, but the other trustees appeared to lack skills, experience, confidence and/or possibly the time to take up and sustain the leadership offered. These principals found their fellow trustees tended to continue to look to them for direction. (p. 49)

Gordon et al.'s. (1994) work found that trustees were happy for principals to take on an even more active role by filtering the material that trustees would have to deal with at meetings:

> ...he's responsible for what any principal is responsible for... you know, bringing matters to the attention of the board which the board need to make policy decisions on, and really should be providing advice and guidance as the chief executive to the board[chairperson]. (Gordon et al., 1994, p. 50)

In one school referred to by Gordon et al., there was an explicit practice of the principal and chairperson filtering out issues and dealing with them between monthly meetings. A trustee in the current study acknowledged the practical effects of such arrangements but was wary of the power being given to a few. One of the factors affecting the format which evolved was the amount of time spent at the school. Some trustees would only attend monthly board and sub-committee meetings while others, especially the chairperson would be calling in at the school five days a week.

One of the other findings that may support the principals' dominance in the running of schools was the MTSP Team's (Barrington, 1992) findings that, while only about half of trustees were clear about the difference between governance and management conceptually and about what the effective distinction is in practice, 12 out of 13 principals in the study were

convinced that their schools operated well in terms of distinguishing between governance and management. This may indicate that principals have shaped the parent trustee - principal relationship so that it very much suits their preferences for distinguishing between governance and management which may leave some of the parent trustees a bit confused.

I would suggest that trustees are content with what is happening because there is too much to control and learn. The principals use this fact to give them space for their role as they map out the type of relationship they want with boards. There is quite a range of relationships in terms of what principals are wanting and at the same time many of the boards are wanting varying levels of control/ input. I identified a similar range of relationships from my own limited observations of the boards in this study. For example, the principal from Beta school provided a lot of direction, which the trustees were willing to accept, whereas Delta's trustees provided much of the direction, that the principal was willing to accept. And different from these two again was Epsilon, where there was some tension evident between the direction provided by the parent trustees and the principal. This means that, for each school, what ends up as the governance - management distinction is what suits both parties except in cases where there is an overlap on what principals are willing to give away and the direction that trustees are wanting to provide.

While there might be aspects of the micro-political in principal - trustee relationships the amount of work generated by the reforms means that the trustees and principals are very dependent on each other to make sure that schools survive. As already shown the principal is a major support for the trustees in their role of governance and while the trustees do what they can there has been little support for the principal's management role. Studies and follow-up articles have indicated that principals' workloads went up as a result and that many principals have resigned since (New Zealand Press Association, 1991f, p. 24; Wylie, 1992a). Area schools in particular have been identified as one of the most hardest hit in this respect (Johnson, 1994d, p. 11). The principals were having difficulty finding time to maintain a school's regular activities as well as the time to organise, co-ordinate and reflect on the new changes which were taking place (Hall & McGee, 1991).

The pressures of running a school can then encourage an attitude of "if it works, use it" (Gordon et al., 1994):

> It does blur the distinction, because what it is is the board then is no longer just looking at policy... we're not just managing, we've got involved in some of the management of student behaviour, but I say 'well, what the hell". So we've blurred the line. I mean where's the rule that says the line has to be a hundred per cent straight? And I think because it is so successful, then if we've got the time to do it, then I'm happy to keep doing it [parent trustee]. (p. 72)

Gordon et al. (1994) suggests that this pressure is compounded by the extra cost of skills required on some tasks so that many trustees become involved in management activities in order to save money. The same financial constraints also mean that many trustees are not in the same position to gain some of those skills once elected:

> ...none of us have done any training courses because we're aware of the financial thing. But it is important, that training I think it is really important. [parent trustee] (Gordon et al., 1994, p99)

And the pressure to find trustees with skills reduces the board's ability to be representative as discussed in the previous section. The end result is that:

> in theory it is difficult...to clearly divide the work of operating the school in terms of governance and management.....In practice, trustees tend to take the approach of 'doing what needs to be done' rather than spending a lot of time classifying tasks. (Gordon et al., 1994, p. 67)

The MTSP team (Barrington, 1992) report that a number of trustees and principals did not find the terms governance and management mutually exclusive. Gordon et al. (1994) also find support for this in the way many trustees use the term governance and management interchangeably.

There is then support for the idea that parent trustees and principals are continually redefining a distinction between governance and management as part of their developing relationship. It is not so much of finding a balance between the role of the trustees and the role of the principals as keeping the school running. Thus for some schools the distinction is done on an issue by issue basis:

> I think that in people's minds...there is so much overlap that it's hard to know where on a particular issue the governance starts and the management stops or vice versa [staff trustee]. (Gordon et al., 1994, p. 70)

There was evidence of this in the current study where what might be considered professional matters were discussed as governance issues.

The MTSP Team (Mansell, 1992; Barrington, 1992) reflected upon the difficulty in distinguishing between governance and management especially in terms of policy. They state Stewart and Snooks' argument that most policy is formulated in practice as staff solve problems and make decisions that are required immediately. They feel that the board's role is thus one of providing a forum for legitimising the policy developed elsewhere. Gordon et al. (1994) found one school in particular used this method whereby policy development was the process of making explicit the informal procedures already in place. However, this study has shown that the boards have been very busy developing policy and the question then might be asked whether it amounts to anything in practice. Given that the role of implementation and monitoring policy has been allocated to the principal and staff (Principals' Implementation Taskforce, 1990a) there may be little information for the trustees to make use of in deciding if policy is being adhered to or not. For all the reference to the charter and its importance to policy development reported by the MTSP Team (Mansell, 1992) little of this can be confirmed in the current study. For some boards it may have a very low profile especially for Alpha board which was using a set of template policies that would then be adapted to the immediate concerns in the policy rather than re-aligned with the charter before other changes were made. The MTSP team did note, however, that few of the interviewees, including teachers, could give specific examples of how the charter was used in their schools beyond policy development.

Monitoring policy in the MTSP study was also reported as being an unknown to many trustees given that their focus was on development. There was some evidence of monitoring policy in the current study based on the Alpha trustee's appraisal of the principal which included some assessment of policy implementation. Any consideration to monitoring for subjects in the MTSP would not occur until the policy was reviewed again.

Those who developed policy on the basis of need felt that monitoring was ongoing and was done informally. This reflects the view of policy being an exercise in problem solving where an essential feature of problem solving is evaluating the solution and then refining it if necessary. As was found in the current study trustees monitor the effect of policy by spending time at school talking to other parents and staff. Many trustees in the MTSP team study were relying on the principal to monitor policy. There was a noted difference between secondary and primary schools in terms of the number of parents and trustees who spend time informally at the school which makes any informal monitoring of policy non-existent[45]. Officially monitoring as a responsibility of the principal and staff was given some formal sanction in the *Guide to Governance and Management* (Principals' Implementation Taskforce, 1990a). Principals in the team study reported that they felt the trustees relied on them to monitor implementation, not that all principals said there was formal monitoring. Some principals report that monitoring did not become an issue until trustees came to work through the principal's appraisal and even then it was the principal who had to encourage this task to be done. Many of the teaching staff did not know what monitoring was being done which then begs the question of how much responsibility they are taking for implementing board policy.

While it might appear that there is a lack of professionalism on the part of staff many would counter that they were already professional and that any policy would just describe present practices and further, to spend the time to develop the policy would have a negative impact on present practices because it would draw time away from them and redirect it to the policy development, a case of the tail wagging the dog.

The trustees' lack of knowledge about the workings of the schools meant that many did not have the confidence and understanding to even initiate

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[45]While there are many organisational differences between primary and secondary schools that may discourage parents from spending time at the schools one might wonder if there is a significant amount of adolescent pressure on parents to stay out of schools.

policy development. One trustee in the current study felt that this was one way the staff kept trustees at a distance, that is staff withheld information to maintain the imbalance of power:

> The staff felt threatened. They thought we might expect too much so I feel that teachers kept the board of trustees in the dark to prevent us raising our expectations. The Education Review Office does support our knowing. (Epsilon trustee, June 1994)

Until that barrier is crossed all the work done by boards is difficult to assess. The Education Review Office has stated that "The most common failing of poorly governed schools was a lack of self-analysis about their own functions" (Johnson, 1994b, p. 20). As boards begin to review what they have been doing they will begin to ask more questions about the implementation and monitoring of policy. It may take an ERO review to tell boards to start looking but once they do then the self analysis should start to occur. This should mean a renegotiation of the relationship between boards and staff but by the time that occurs people should feel more settled about their different roles, otherwise, as the team suggest, staff and trustees have found an easy compromise that suits both parties:

> A number of schools reported satisfying collaboration between parent trustees and teachers. None of the parents' responses indicated any resentment or fear at teachers taking over their role. It seems that people in schools have adapted this aspect of the reforms to match what makes sense to them in an environment of mutual respect and confidence in the goodwill between teachers and trustees. (Mansell, 1992, p. 40)

In a culture of trust and co-operation maybe this is as efficient and effective an outcome as is possible. What is changed is that accountability is blurred and while this may not bother the staff and trustees it will upset the Ministry operating within a culture informed by agency theory. This will add another dimension to the model whereby governance also includes settling on such arrangements as policy development, implementation and monitoring to suit the board and school. The administration end of the governance - administration continuum would rather make explicit the roles taken by various groups within a school so as to make the lines of accountability clear in a principal - agency formulation. I have no evidence to see which way people are beginning to

move on this matter but I would anticipate that if this arrangement were to create a problem of some sort for the Ministry they may then want to clarify the lines of accountability between boards and staff. This may also happen if the bulk funding of staffing salaries is implemented along with performance pay arrangements in salary settlements. Performance pay would not seem feasible if the staff are responsible for monitoring the very policy they are implementing:

> The cultures of the schools in this study, built from the beliefs and values of the different groups with an interest in the schools, have proved to be dynamic and flexible. The new managerialism with its rigid separation of the functions of policy-making and policy implementation seems in these 15 schools, so far at least, to be over-ridden by the more collaborative negotiated leadership style which is strong in New Zealand schools. (Mansell, 1992, p. 41)

If as Codd and Gordon (1990) imply that the charter reflects the power and control of the state then there are many aspects of this that have yet to be tested in practice. The charter is an undertaking between board and the Minister but its fulfilment relies on the relationship between the board and the staff. ERO, on behalf of the Minister, will attempt to make use of the control available but with three - yearly reviews there are many things that can happen in between. Maybe the attitude of the Minister is 'why should I care how other issues are resolved as long as my requirements are being met'. Once again this would support Codd's (1990) description of such policy as structural on the basis that the Ministry manages its own economic output by giving schools a bulk grant to work with. How they spend it is not so much a consequence as long as state guidelines are being followed. This process is not all one way, however, as the trustees' experiences reveal that they have developed their own ways of doing things that means state control is not total. The implications of this will be elaborated upon in the following chapter.

In summary, the material reviewed above supports the distinction between governance and management; policy development, implementation and monitoring; and content and process at each school, that tends to reflect a compromise between the type of relationship developed between the parent trustees and principal and the requirements

and restrictions placed by the Ministry. There are a range of factors which impact on the development of the relationship between principal and trustees, such as funding difficulties, trustee skills for management tasks, trustee knowledge of school operations and amount of time spent at school by trustees between formal meetings. The influence of these factors contributes to each school individualising the way the concepts of governance and management are practised.

The relationships between the partners who have responsibilities for the running of a school are very complex with many varying factors implicated in the final outcome. However, the expectations about those responsibilities form the basis of what kind of partnership people were hoping to realise. The final outcome has seen many expectations not being met on the part of the trustees and the Ministry and the partnership is under constant mediation, but not necessarily through a process of collaboration.

School needs

In the previous chapter there was found to be an expectation shown by trustees that they would be involved in educational administration to meet school needs as opposed to fulfilling government requirements. The partnership between the boards and the Ministry was based on an expectation that the Ministry would take responsibility for supporting the boards in their endeavours to achieve this goal.

As noted previously there was the observed difference in attitude to policy. It tended to be negative when it was seen as obscure and the only value in it was to meet some government requirement, whereas there was more enthusiasm for policy when it was seen as a problem solving tool for the board. And like the MTSP's (Hall & McGee, 1991) findings if a school was developing policy for problem solving then it is more likely to have an impact on school culture. The schools in this present study had varying attitudes and therefore differing approaches to developing policy, whether it be the use of a short term sub-committee or permanent policy sub-committee or delegation of work to other sub-committees or teachers. The board that used temporary sub-committees did this for the purpose of maintaining enthusiasm so as not to exhaust the same people.

Similar attitudes of only writing policy as needed were shown by trustees in one of the schools in Gordon et al.'s study (1994). Other schools in their study also expressed annoyance at having to meet external requirements:

> There's been a huge change in the amount of work administrators have to do, because the reforms so far have been essentially reforms of administration in education, and I mean I personally now have the entire Ministry of Education portfolio dumped on my desk every morning and I do all their work for them. [principal] (p. 88)

and for one in particular their relationship with the Ministry meant that they felt obliged to do this in order to be seen to be doing a good job. This was just in case they would need to go to the Ministry for financial support as they had done in the past. Here was a case then when meeting the school's needs was best done by meeting government requirements. Gordon et al. (1994) believe that this situation reflects a major difference between schools who are "poorer" financially as opposed to ones who are "richer". She contends that this creates a "one-sided power relationship" which disadvantages schools such as this who are often in this position as a result of a falling roll. The Ministry is then in a better position to maintain a principal - agent relationship with the schools as opposed to those schools which are not threatened by funding problems and are better placed to operate more autonomously in their governance. As described in chapter 1 the ability to ignore more of the external requirements so as to focus on the needs of the schools represents for Gordon et al. "a model of an autonomous institution". The important characteristic of this is a minimal relationship with the centre rather than a "bad" one. This however would raise an issue of equity, whereby those schools which have the certainty of a growing roll and a supportive community financially are in a better position to use their autonomy to concentrate on meeting the needs of their school, as they perceive, them rather than how the centre may define them:

> ...like a railway station out here, because the parents feel they can come in, and that's the very thing we've been trying hard to achieve. But having done that we can hardly cope with the results...I can hardly hear myself think and [the school secretary's] job has just gone completely crazy....*So, I'm not about to let what I consider to be...requirements for paper to get in the way of the real problems*

> *we've got on a day to day basis* [My emphasis]. [principal] (Gordon et al., 1994, p. 26)

This school was in a position to take on an administration officer to carry out a number of everyday chores that had previously been the responsibility of the principal. One of the concerns already noted in the research reviewed was the amount of small administrative tasks that principals had to deal with as part of their daily activities that would not generally be viewed as the responsibility of chief executives in other organisations.

One of the positive outcomes from the reforms of *Tomorrow's Schools* was described as the introduction of 'local management'. This is "a greater ability to take charge of matters, make decisions and respond quickly to local needs." (Barrington, 1992, p. 38)[46]. The major positive aspect of reforms was an ability 'to get things done'. This was more evident for primary school trustees and principals as opposed to secondary school trustees and principals who believed the ideas of local management have as yet to be fulfilled. They were themselves already in a position of management prior to the reforms and so any change was less significant for them. Much of the satisfaction with local management, however, is qualified by the recognition that the principals were attending to too many minor administrative matters. Too many local supports had been removed and the government's commitment was reduced:

> That's good; its been for the better, But I don't think there has been enough support. They took a whole lot of support away, and that was not to do with effective management; that just came down to government cost savings. (Barrington, 1992, p. 25)

The opportunity to see things change in the school by being able to take control and being responsive is central to trustees expectations about

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[46]This term can cause some confusion after the debate about governance and management. Local management is a reference to the central delegation of decision making to local schools rather than a reference to the process of governance and management within the schools at the local level. Self-management should be treated in the same way - a reference to the relationship of the schools to the central authority.

meeting school needs. Their ability to do this is lowered by the central authority's placing too many constraints on the board or actually creating work, and the central authority's not supporting schools with adequate resources. These elements may be inherent in the new system as part of the central control on inputs resulting from the development of structural policies which means that whatever the rhetoric about local management and school governance the new reforms actually give priority to government requirements over what the boards see as school needs. This was apparent in the present study and supported by evidence from the MTSP (McConnell & Jefferies, 1991):

> Many problems are now a result of structures set up. The Ministry of Education are.[sic] making more decisions. A sense of cost effective interest rather than education value seems to dominate. Board of Trustee members are not fully trained or capable of running schools. The system is contradictory - parent-community involvement versus government dictates. (p. 6)
>
> As principal, changes that have taken place include too much time spent on actioning trivia, justifying the standard of education practices [policy] and having far less time available for professional tasks. (p. 6)

Another question raised above is, even if some of these problems were resolved, are parent trustees in a position to discern what schools' needs are, in order to meet them, especially if schools' needs are about student learning? This becomes difficult to assess but there is certainly an interdependency in the relationship between staff and trustees. Meeting student needs as defined by the curriculum is a task that has been "given" to staff as part of their professional responsibility and it is the complexity of the curriculum that suggests that trustees would require extensive training in order to check if those needs are being meet. It is the principal's responsibility to appraise staff but the trustees then have to ascertain from the principal's appraisal whether this has been done and decide whether students' needs are being met. Although I have no evidence for it from the current study there is a suggestion that informal monitoring would be used to ascertain whether these needs are being met (Gordon et al., 1994). That is, if there are enough complaints about the teaching practices occurring in a particular class, then trustees or principal may be required to take action. Otherwise the assessment and monitoring is between the

staff and principal. Once again this highlights the culture of trust and co-operation that is at work in a school which is functioning effectively. It is when there is a break down (or at least perceived) in the trust that difficulties arise as was the case cited earlier of the Waimumu board of trustees (Dungey, 1993, p. 1).

Initially the change to school administration was to make little difference to teachers (Taskforce to Review Educational Administration, 1988). However, in the present study, as well as in the MTSP, it was found that there was an increase in teacher involvement (Calder, 1992; McConnell & Jefferies, 1991). Most notable was the input from teachers in the development of curriculum related policy and an increase in the amount of teacher development made available. There was also a change in the accountability of teachers whereby the principal of a school was responsible for appraising them. At present the appraisal is used in the formative evaluation context of professional development rather than the summative evaluation context of monitoring staff performance as a management function. Both of these functions were recognised in the Guide to Personnel Management (Principals' Implementation Taskforce, 1990b) but other than attempting to make explicit the expectations for teachers the main priority is given to individual professional development.

Here was one area where agency theory was not able to be implemented in the direct sense. For this to happen a more coherent set of criteria would need to be established:

> The Minister of Education confirmed the integral relationship between bulk funding of teacher salaries and PRP [performance related pay]. Certainly, without bulk funding in place, schools would not bear any of the financial responsibility for their decisions regarding teacher salaries. (Annesley, 1992, pp. 146-147)

This is still on the agenda for such groups as the State Services Commission who in 1994 were wanting to introduce a performance related pay scheme as part of the most recent round of award negotiations (Foley, 1994). The difficulty is that the theory does not fit the practicalities of the teaching process as they now exist. The creation of a principal - agent environment in education would be made possible with a policy of

bulk funding and the Employment Contracts Act. However, it would also need to be integrated with performance related pay, but in order for this to happen, a theory of value addition in the education process would need to be developed for it to hold any legitimacy. This is unlikely to be achieved as the inputs and outputs on the educational process are difficult to assess. Until these changes are brought about staff appraisal remains a matter of improving teaching rather than focusing on improving learning.

Staff appraisal can then be used to meet schools needs, rather than perform a management function, by making sure that various staff are keeping up-to-date in their areas of curriculum responsibility as well as the school making sure that all curriculum areas are covered by the staff.

One of the main reasons given by trustees for seeing that school needs are given priority over government requirements in a time of change is to make sure that the basic stability of the institution is maintained. The MTSP (McConnell & Jefferies, 1991) reported that principals identified the maintenance of school stability in the midst of change as one of their major accomplishments.

At other times boards have attempted to change their systems in order to meet perceived needs which are being restricted by government requirements. The most recent example has been the attempt to have board elections staggered. The reasons given were that despite 45 per cent of trustees elected in 1992 having board experience prior to the election, some 30 per cent of schools had a complete change in board membership. "It could lead to disagreements with the principal if new board members did not agree with the previous board's direction" (Johnson, 1994c, p. 4). This was one of the factors seen to contribute to a recent dispute between the principal and trustees at Timaru Girls' High School. The minister turned down the request on the basis that it would cost too much and by saying "frequent staggered elections would frustrate the task of building an experienced group of trustees" (Johnson, 1994a, p. 2). This was despite both the Secondary Principals' Association and the Primary Principals' Federation giving support to the idea. It was usually their members that would have to support the induction of new trustees. At the 1992 trustee elections 5 out of the 89 schools identified in the Dunedin area had a complete turnover in parent trustees (Staff Reporters, 1992a, p. 24; Staff

Reporters, 1992b, p. 23). More recently the STA conducted its own survey and predicts that about 50 per cent of trustees would stand again and expects only 2 per cent of schools to find a complete turnover of elected trustees (New Zealand Press Association, 1994d, p. 9).

This is an interesting example of the politics involved. A request which would seem reasonable is made for a change to eliminate some perceived problems in board administration. A change that would make boards more efficient and therefore more effective. The Minister turns down the request on the basis that it would cost too much; that is, it does not meet Government requirements even if it does meet school needs. The second reason is counter - intuitive in the context of the perceived problem and suggests that the Minister does not understand the needs of boards. It is the STA who suggests another possible answer ; that is, not enough boards have a complete turnover of trustees to warrant a change to board elections. This information comes too late for the Minister of Education who has given the impression that he does not wish to support trustees on this matter.

School needs at the moment still reflect a focus on administration rather than student learning (McConnell & Jefferies, 1991; Wylie, 1991) but the expectation is that this will alter:

> Changes have occurred in administration but in a sense change hasn't occurred where it matters - at the 'grass roots', the classrooms. (McConnell & Jefferies, 1991, p. 19)

The main aim is to ensure that school resources are not being channelled off to fulfil what are considered extraneous government requirements that prevent the trustees from using their autonomy to develop the kind of school procedures that they see as suitable. Governance then becomes very localised as these procedures, based on the sharing of responsibilities, adapt to the many intervening factors impinging on trustee activities.

Governance

Governance came up as an issue for trustees as the broader concept implied within each of the four contributing themes. The question by the MTSP team (Barrington, 1992) as to whether trustees thought that *Tomorrow's Schools* had increased the control of education by parents

received a variety of responses. One third of the primary trustee group thought that parent control had increased:

> People within the school can make appointments, knowing what is needed. It has been good that parents have responsibility. It has brought out abilities we didn't know we had. We have a very definite interest in the school as we have our children there. (p. 31)[47]

Another third felt that the opportunity for more parent control was available due to the reforms while another third felt there had been no change:

> I think that's a lot of crap really. They haven't really given us much. They still have the control. They didn't really give us the control. They just gave us the hard work and they still want to control it down in Wellington. (p. 32)

But what does it mean to control or have an input into decision-making? Are there certain tasks that are worthy of control, or in relation to which trustees wish to have an input, and other tasks are not desired? And how does the wish to control or have an input affect the type of relationships developed? Within the aspirations for governance, those tasks that trustees feel they need to control or have an input into, vary. Those who do not participate may well feel that they cannot or do not wish to exercise control. Others think that some tasks are important to control, such as the above example of making staff appointments.

There were those who wanted an input:

> I think the parents were conned a bit. When [the reforms] were proposed parents were led to believe that they would have input into what is being taught in the school. It hasn't happened this way. (Barrington, 1992, p. 32)

And there were those who did not:

> I don't think we actually need control. We point the direction; we do that in the charter. But I don't want control-control, e.g. syllabuses. I want to know that

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[47]This quote is interesting because it supports the previously discussed notion of individual competence from the Picot Report - the assumption that, where there is an interest or commitment there is ability.

> teachers have got the right books and expertise to do it, been on courses, and are up-to-date with the modern things in education - that's the sort of thing I want control of. Not hands on in the classroom, they train for three years to do that; they're professionals, they decide that. (Barrington, 1992, p. 33)

Thus what is governance, in terms of what tasks that trustees wish to have a say in, can vary. It also indicates that governance is based on co-operative relationships with other people involved. As noted previously within a school the co-operative and diverse nature of the institution means that control and input can take on many forms. One of the major limitations to trustee control was their insufficient knowledge and the low level of understanding about schooling which tended to place the principal in control of all the decision-making that the trustees did not realise, or believe to be, an issue. The result of this for trustees is that the control of some school activities, of which the curriculum is an example, "remains elsewhere". Parents were not knowledgeable of what was involved and for some schools, as shown in the current study and other research described earlier, did not believe that the curriculum was an area they needed to become involved in unless it was an issue for the community - such as religious education. The basis of the partnership relies on the trust in the professionals and that things are "not a problem" (Gordon et al., 1994).

As expressed earlier in this chapter the principal is central to the way partners in the enterprise work together. The principals themselves are not as convinced as the parents about the amount of control that parents have in the education of their children. One of the ideas expressed in the MTSP by some principals was that control refers more to management which is not what the Trustees' role is about:

> They still don't have control - only governance, not of management.
>
> Parents don't know and 99% are leaving it to the teachers and 1% are stuffing up the system.
>
> (Barrington, 1992, p. 35)

The implication from these comments is that maybe control is centred in management rather than governance so that control is vested in the principal and staff. As one parent noted above the trustees' role is in

providing direction rather than control. And for some principals this arrangement would suit them:

> [The BoT] Keeps its hands off. It does that really well. And it will interfere - if that's the correct word to use - only when it needs to. (Gordon, Boyask, & Pearce, 1994, p. 70)

It is difficult to anticipate whether this relationship will satisfy parents' eagerness for participation in schooling yet at the same time leave the control with the professionals, but there are indications that it might:

> Our board members have got a vision. They know what they want and they let [the principal] know, and it's up to him to actually map out a programme to fulfil that vision. They, in actual fact, give him free rein because they believe that their own skills in terms of getting to that vision are limited. They let him know what they want and he is at the helm. (Barrington, 1992, p. 11)

However, if as suggested the central authorities retain much of the control of the system overall then the principals are merely administrators working on behalf of the Ministry - a proposition confirmed above.

The nature of the processes by which these features of the partnership are continually maintained or at times renegotiated will require research based on more long term participant observation methodologies rather than the non-participant observation and interview approaches used to assess the *Tomorrow's Schools* reforms in the current study and the MTSP.

Summary

This chapter has demonstrated that there is support in the other New Zealand literature for the four themes but the overlapping and intertwining means that I must be able to justify the boundaries that I have drawn on a relatively smooth topography. There is also a need to examine the relationship between the four themes and the overall theme of governance. The advantage that the themes provide are in linking the macro and the micro which, as the theoretical literature suggests, is the next important stage in the development of policy sociology.

Chapter 9

Conclusion

In the previous chapter the findings of the current study were integrated with the findings of three other major studies conducted in New Zealand since the beginning of the reforms. It was found that there was general agreement about the outcomes of policy changes for schools. Furthermore the themes arising from the data in this study have also found support in the substantive research findings of the other studies. This concluding chapter will review the themes developed by the authors of the other research which dominate their accounts of the reforms in educational administration. The model emerging developed in chapter 7 will be re-evaluated in terms of its ability to account for material in the previous chapters and its contribution to Policy Sociology. This chapter will then conclude with a summary of the strengths and weaknesses of this study and a consideration of the possible future direction for research in this area.

The theme of structured reform is supported by very similar concerns about the speed of change and the amount of uncertainty that it has created. Mitchell et al. (1993) and Wylie (1992a) both identified the reform process as creating problems as much as solving any. They also recognised the importance of high workload levels, inadequate resourcing, problems with establishing relationships with the central authorities, and the sequencing of devolution with training and support. Wylie focused on the level of satisfaction and the variations between local groups involved in the reform, whereas Mitchell et al. referred to the high level of ownership of the reforms. There were not the same references to the Ministry "changing the rules" as there was in the current study but the same idea was expressed in other ways such as boards "being over-ridden" by the Ministry, when it was clear that the Ministry was making uni-lateral decisions to change policy and procedures without consulting boards.

Both Mitchell et al. (1993) and Wylie (1992a) focus on the implications for further reform in the areas of curriculum, in which boards may find it

difficult to participate until the workloads of the current reforms have diminished. Mitchell describes these reforms as "waves".

Gordon et al. (1994) report similar findings to Mitchell and Wylie but do not draw on them as much. Their concerns look at the nature of the new environment and the amount of support available. In particular, issues relating to funding suggest that inequities are developing in terms of resources, an idea confirmed by Wylie's research. This might be considered a lack of support given that the researchers found that adequate funding is thought to be the responsibility of the Ministry. Thus the theme of trustees expecting to work in a supported environment was also present in the other research, but one of the refinements to the idea is that some people thought the support was unavailable because the Ministry and others could not provide it, whereas others felt that the external agencies did not want to provide the support. One of the reasons revealed for why the support was expected was that the trustees did not believe that, as volunteers, they would be in a position to accept a complete set of responsibilities for local management at once, but rather that these would be delegated at a pace they could deal with.

All the studies highlight the importance of the relationships between those parties concerned in the reforms. The support was seen to be part of the Ministry's responsibility in the shared partnership that they were developing with boards. The literature highlights that this partnership, as signified by the charter, was to be based on consultation, consensus and collaboration rather than a controlling and directive partnership based on agency theory (Sullivan, 1992). The partnership itself did not fulfil expectations about how the board was to relate to the rest of the "community" in its own effort to consult. Rather the relationship between the board and its community is one of representation and the provision of the opportunity to participate. All of the studies highlighted the difficulty in maintaining the interest of the community in policy development. Gordon et al. (1994) highlight a dilemma for boards between electing and co-opting for representation as opposed to skills. It may be that the demand for skills rather than a focus on representation, and the difficulty in consulting the community, accounts for the fact that many parents believe there has been no change in their relationship with the schools. Wylie (1992 b) and Mitchell et al. refer to these sorts of issues under the

theme of "parents as governors". With this theme they cover the relationships between the boards and the community and the staff. There is also consideration given to the matter of distinguishing governance and management.

The boards' relationship with staff was to be based on the application of the concept of governance and management. All three studies support the idea that whatever the 'textbook' definitions are that separate governance and management, all schools tend make their own distinctions in practice. As well as workloads, mentioned previously, another major influence on the development of the relationship was the imbalance in the knowledge and understanding of learning institutions between the groups. This was not seen as a problem by many trustees who, in acknowledging the professionalism of the staff, felt that in an atmosphere of trust and co-operation between staff and boards, this imbalance was quite appropriate.

Gordon et al. (1994) use the term "effective" governance to describe the abilities of boards to solve their problems and resolve issues. The outcome of this for each particular board is an individualised form of governance based on the many varying factors involved. Mitchell et al.'s (1993) list of independent and intervening variables derived from the Picot Report were central to their theme of improving the quality of schooling. They believe that it is too early to evaluate improvement in learning and unfortunately they did not indicate whether their research found support for the existence of the variables they list and how they appear to be interacting. I believe the research does reveal their presence. Having "clarity of purpose" is similar to knowing a school's needs. Having "control of resources" required for running a school increases responsiveness to school needs and creates a certainty about the board's ability to meet the school's needs. The "positive" intervening variables that they listed reflect the enthusiasm and commitment shown by trustees in this study and the other research findings. The "negative" intervening variables of a dropping roll is accounted for in the dilemma of certainty - uncertainty where a dropping roll creates uncertainty about funding. Certainty in this domain is only maintained by a static or increasing roll. The other negative intervening role is the centre's monitoring of schools by ERO. The monitoring agency was in a position to contribute to a supported environment if it was going to provide formative evaluations

but becomes a restriction to the autonomy of the boards if it only provides summative evaluations. This was the concern of Gordon et al. about ERO's focusing too much on outcomes without being able to measure the processes by which boards went about meeting school needs. The "less successful" schools which were being forced to follow government requirements, possibly at the expense of their school needs, may have been just as effective in governance.

The difficulty here is that some might respond to Gordon et al. by saying that a school with a falling roll is not being responsive to its community - that it is the board's fault. This increased uncertainty is the board's own doing and therefore it should not expect support from the central agencies. However, Gordon et al. claim that the uncertainty caused by the falling roll is not attributable to the board but the transient community it serves. If the central authorities will not support boards then inequities will arise nationally from this form of educational provision. As shown in this particular case, this has affected the board's ability to have as much autonomy in its efforts to meet schools needs. Thus the emerging model needs to be able to link factors of uncertainty and central support to board's abilities to have autonomy in governance and in meeting school needs.

The primary focus for boards was meeting school needs. This function was approached with responsiveness and enthusiasm. All three research findings have found that parents and staff are working together well in order to meet the school needs with Wylie (1992a) and the MTSP team (McConnell & Jefferies, 1991) citing good working relations as one of the boards' major achievements during the reforms. Those things that might interfere with meeting school needs such as government requirements or restrictions were seen as preventing boards from achieving this aim. Mitchell et al. refer to the notions of choice and devolution to describe the increased decision-making that both parents have in choosing a school and trustees have in governing their schools. The ability to do this has only been possible through the devolution of power from the centre. Mitchell et al. compare devolution of power and the decentralisation of responsibility and highlight that finding a balance that both the state and boards are in agreement about is quite difficult. Devolution, then, is about increasing autonomy available to local schools in order to be responsive to

local needs. Decentralisation is about increasing the responsibility for meeting outcomes which may or may not be the same as the school needs as defined by boards. A feature of the partnership in meeting school needs was the parent trustees reliance on the staff to elaborate on what those needs were, especially in respect of the curriculum. One of the major concerns for boards during the period of change was maintaining the stability of the functioning of the school especially when most trustees felt that schools were doing a good job already. Gordon et al. describe this as "continuity" which is also a function of boards managing succession.

Mitchell et al. also use the term continuity but use it to refer to the broader historical demands for change that have always been present. This is one aspect of change that the current model does not explicitly acknowledge - but at the same time does not actively deny the influence of historical background. Mitchell et al. point out that many of the expectations reflected in the ethnographic data have a past, which in many cases explains their salience. They claim that historically parents have always been eager to participate in school activities. There have been calls for devolution of power previously and the emphasis on equity has also been well established which may well contribute to the kinds of expectations placed on the central services to provide certain kinds of support to maintain, what many parents in the research have indicated is, a "good educational system" (Mitchell et al., 1994 and Wylie 1992a).

The overall theme that incorporates how trustees make sense of their work, is based on why parents became involved and what they believed they would be doing when they agreed to participate in running a school. This combination of motivation and expectation has not been adequately explored in any of the studies but rather can be pieced together from a range of findings as discussed in chapter 8. It has been the operationalisation of trustee expectation which has then been moulded and adapted by a range of notions discussed above that have resulted in determining the outcome of what it means to be a trustee. These notions involve ideas about shared responsibility and partnership; autonomy, control, governance, management and administration; roles of the central agencies, staff and trustees; and consultation. While the studies of Mitchell et al., Gordon et al., and Wylie indicate the importance of these none have gone the next step to consider how they relate to each other. This will be

done here in the context of re-evaluating the emergent model formulated in chapter 7.

Re-evaluation of the model

The material in the previous chapter suggests that the emergent model presented in chapter 7 can integrate the findings from other New Zealand research in the same area. The main themes identified above from the research of Mitchell et al., Gordon et al. and Wylie have many similarities in what they consider to have had an important influence on the outcomes of *Tomorrow's Schools* in New Zealand.

The emergent model represented in Figure 2 did not give consideration to the interrelationships between the four main themes of structured reform, supported environment, shared responsibility and school needs. When doing this in the light of the range of notions involved in trustee activity described above, some re-alignment occurs in the model. Firstly, the ideas of shared responsibility and partnership form the basis of the relationship between the centre and the boards that constitutes the Macro-level relationship. The two themes of structured reform and supported environment are both considered the responsibility of the centre in the new partnership. The more support provided the more the Ministry and other central agencies such as the SES and ERO were seen to be fulfilling their expected role in the equal partnership.

These two themes have their own dynamic that are critical to the Trustees' view of the centre, usually represented by the Ministry and Minister. The theme of structured reform is based upon expectations about the period of change or reform that assumes that the reform has an end at which point there is relative stasis. The new system is in place and it will remain relatively unchanged in comparison to when the reforms first started. This would imply that the first theme will only be appropriate for the length of time that reform is taking place. The indication of when this has happened will be when the dilemma of certainty - uncertainty has been diminished to the point at which it is of little significance to trustees, when trustees know how the system works and how they can work within it. This assumes that the new system once in place will be coherent. Should it be that the new system is chaotic or disorganised then the dilemma will become a feature of the new system rather than just reflecting the period

of change. One of the recognised characteristics of the reforms is that the new system is very much politicised which by its nature maintains the dilemma of certainty - uncertainty as an aspect of the new system. This is not to say that at one time it was not but rather that the re-arranging of the relationships in education has altered the politics involved, heightening awareness of the power that the centre has and its disregard for boards shown by its willingness to 'change the rules' or 'override the boards'.

The certainty - uncertainty dilemma can then be both a part of the structured reform theme and the supported environment theme. I would hypothesize that in order for the reforms to be carried out in a way that people could cope with, as opposed to them being "too rushed" or being exposed to "too much change too quickly", then the themes of structured reform and supported environment have to be negatively correlated; that is, the less structure to the reforms then the more support needs to be available and similarly the more structure to the reforms then the less support people need. This would not seem like a surprising finding but rather reflects the "common sense" apparent in people's expectations about change. The preferred context for change and a new environment, as represented by high levels of support and a highly ordered reform, would present an optimal possibility of empowerment through devolution. This part of the model can now be reconfigured and is shown in Figure 3.

The large box represents the macro relationship between two micro level groups represented by the smaller boxes. The two arrows representing the dilemmas discussed above are place within the centre's box as it is perceived by boards as the centre's responsibility. The terms ontological security and insecurity described in chapter 2 are taken from Giddens. When there is high levels of support and the reforms are structured then this equates with the optimal context for empowerment. Or in the specific case represented in Figure 3, devolution can take many forms but only when it is contextualised by order and support can it be considered that the trustees are being "empowered".

What is interesting is to speculate about why the amount of structure and the level of support was not provided in line with expectations. One consideration, as mentioned earlier, is that the centre was undergoing as much change as the boards. This would support a recommendation that

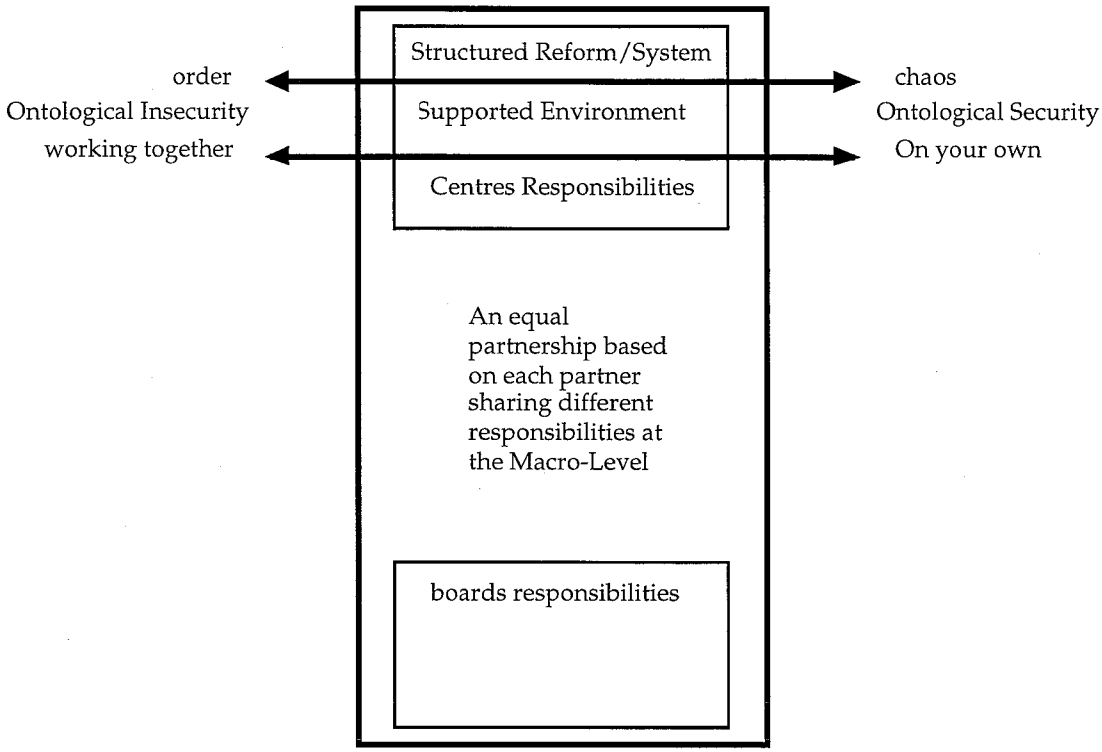

Figure 3 The model presented pictorially showing the government's responsibilities for the provision of a structured reform and a supported environment

one should not change too many parts of a system at once. To adapt an idea and a phrase from Bronfenbrenner - "who supports the supporters?" (Rosemergy and Meade, 1986). How did the people at the centre feel about the reforms as they experienced them? Did they believe that they were in a position to support boards, and also, did the expectation that they would in fact do this, come from the boards alone, or did the Minister of Education and the publicity surrounding the proposed reforms at the time also create the expectation? One of the main points to consider here, raised by Bronfenbrenner, is whatever the levels of support provided, it is the perception of this provision that is important (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Some of the boards perceived that the Ministry was unable to provide support while others believed they did not want to provide it. The perception that the Ministry may not have wanted to provide support was more likely based on an idea that someone made a decision further up the hierarchy in the Ministry that prevented people closer to the schools from being able to provide the support. This involves speculation but something that seems reasonable to consider in the light of the boards'

experiences and the model's ability to support hypothesizing of this kind (Linzey, 1991).

In terms of the model the boards' part of the shared responsibilities involve participating at the local level. This is based on the expectation that trustees' participation in the educational process is to see that school needs are meet. This representation then allows us to identify the idea of an equal partnership at the macro level as one of shared responsibility - each contributing something different. Many of the expectations at the macro level are different at the micro level yet the same terms are used to refer to them. This, as discussed above, can create some confusion but it is possible to clarify this through the model. At the macro level the governance - administration dilemma reflects the amount of control devolved from the centre to the boards. The basis for interaction between the centre and the boards is referred to as consultation but because it is not based on face to face interaction it is different from the type of consultation that the boards are meant to be involved in with their communities. There is still a sense in which the centre provides information, as one type of consultation, through to the other extreme of collaboration. But at the macro level informing the other partner amounts to the centre directing the boards by placing restrictions and requirements which the boards have to follow. Collaboration in this context - still defined as having the responsibility to act - refers to the centre's giving boards more autonomy by devolution. Devolving responsibility to act by direction, which is how many boards view bulk funding, is not collaboration because it is not based on equal partners' reaching consensus on the matter. If this happens there is no ownership which was identified above (see chapter 8) as being critical to the success of reforms. These aspects of the partnership are represented in Figure 4.

A point to note is that the term administration has been replaced by management. In Figure 2 administration was used so as to differentiate governance and management at the micro level, from the macro level. Given how, as discussed above, many references to the boards' activities at the macro level are described as management - local and self - this term will be used, as the model can now show the distinction. Even though many of the trustees do use the term administration.

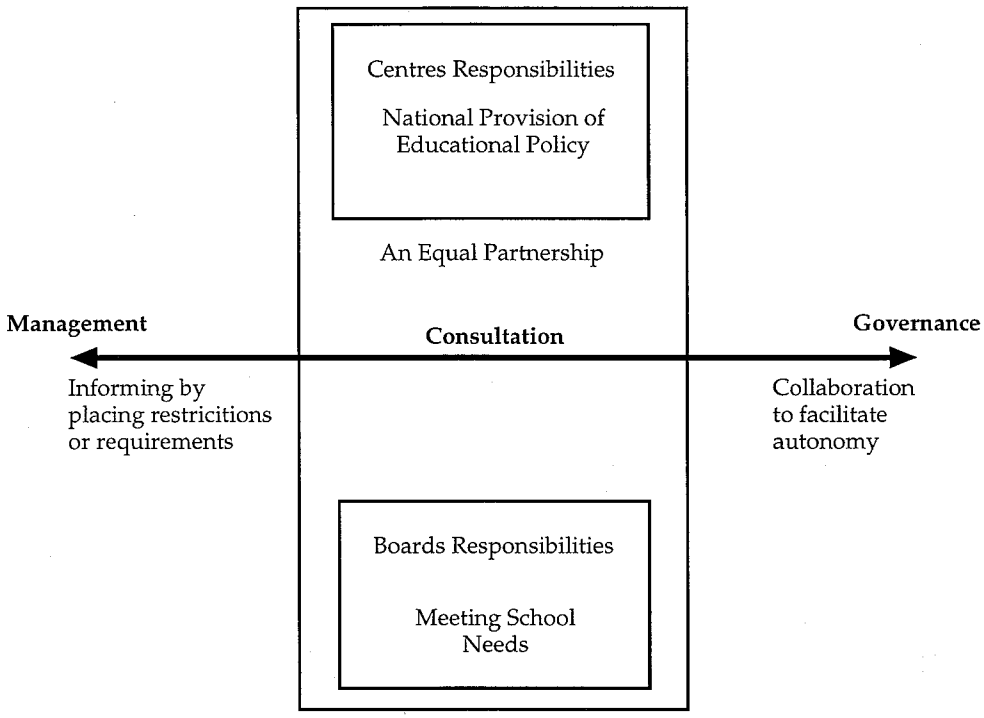

Figure 4 A diagram of the model presenting the relationship between the centre and the boards mediated by consultation at the macro-level

The nature of the partnership at the macro level is now determined by the type of consultation engaged upon. If the centre places too many restrictions and requirements upon boards then the idea of an equal partnership is diminished and trustees start to feel that they are merely administering on behalf of the government and Ministry; whereas, the more collaboration there is then the more autonomy that the boards feel they have been given in order to meet their schools' needs. While it might be tempting to make an overall judgement about the type of collaboration between the centre and boards it is probably more useful to make the judgement on each issue that requires consultation. As the research has shown the boards do have autonomy to meet certain needs, which they appreciate, but are given direction in how they should meet others, which the trustees do not like. But at the same time many trustees expect the centre to provide direction in such areas as the curriculum but not, for the moment, bulk funding. As with bulk funding what becomes important then is how boards perceive the relationships between the issues that are being devolved or decentralised. As has been shown boards want more autonomy but they do not want to control or have responsibility for

everything. Autonomy does not mean "being on your own" but rather collaborating within an equal partnership.

Another partnership was that between boards, staff and the community at the micro-level. This had its own dynamic but has been described by using the same terms used at the macro-level. It is now possible to complete the model by elaborating on the micro-level features. Once again central to the partnership is the idea of shared responsibility and consultation. There has been a higher expectation that consultation at the micro-level would be based on collaborative face to face interaction. The formalised attempts at this have generally received varying success, especially when the boards consult the notional group of the community and so consultation is often based on a process of informing the community on what is happening. This turns the relationship into one of representation rather than collaboration and relies on a matter of trust that the boards are doing their tasks appropriately. As was described above, there was a tendency for parents to become involved only when something was going wrong. Absence of parent input into collaborative consultation would then tend to suggest that non-trustee parents are satisfied with parent trustees representation of the larger parent community.

In contrast, the relationship with the staff is based on collaboration because of the lack of knowledge and understanding by the trustees on many of the organisational aspects of schools and the ability to have more face to face interaction. This collaboration with staff has altered the way the differing tasks of governance and management are undertaken in schools. These features of the model have been shown diagrammatically in Figure 5.

Policy development and implementation, whether formal or informal is altered by this collaboration but in a culture of trust and co-operation this process is not seen as problematic. This is represented in Figure 5 by the greying line of consultation at the collaborative end of the continuum where there is little or less to differentiate who takes part in governance or management. If the consultation between boards and staff was based on providing direction (informing), such as the text book definitions of governance and management would imply, then this would change the

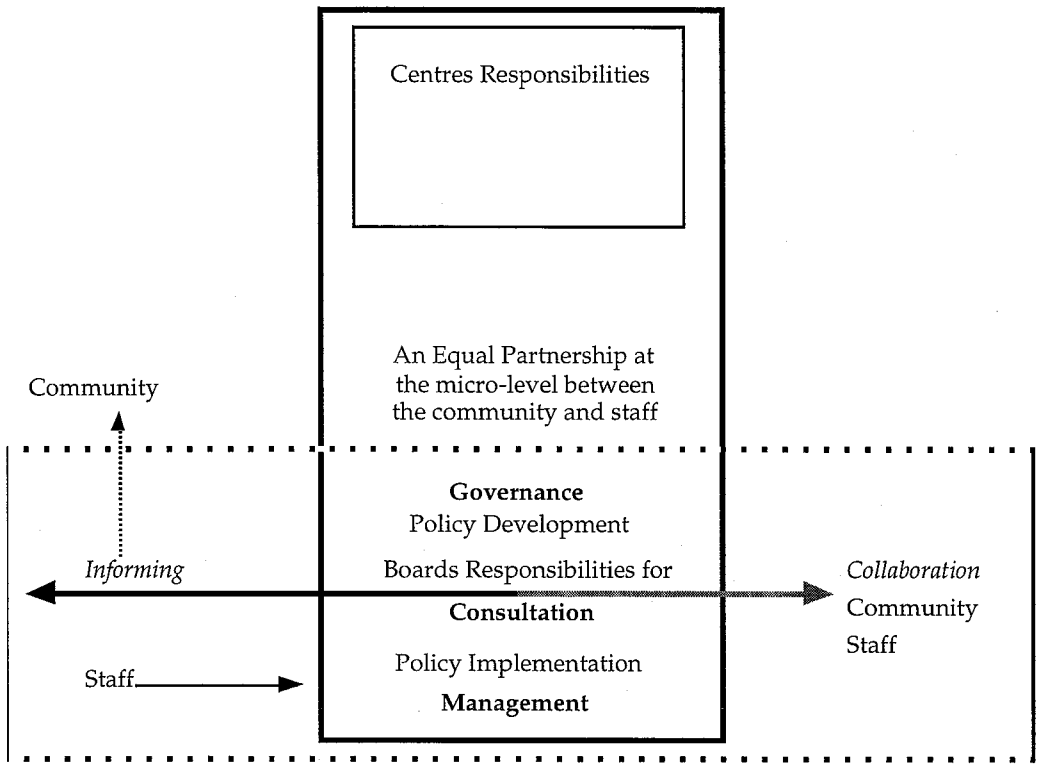

Figure 5 A diagram of the model representing the boards' responsibilities for consultation and some of the outcomes at the micro-level[48]

nature of the relationship to adhere more to the principles of agency theory with the result that staff input would be limited to management and policy implementation as shown in Figure 5. For the community, consultation by informing would usually result in the non-trustee parents being removed from both governance and management activity[49].

By removing some of the detail it is possible to compile a representation of the model drawing on the main features shown in Figures 3-5 and providing an overall view. This has been done and shown in Figure 6.

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[48]In the Figure the board's micro-level box from earlier diagrams has been expanded to the larger dotted box to make room.

[49]For this reason in Figure 5 the community is represented as being outside the box indicating the governance - management process at the informing end of consultation.

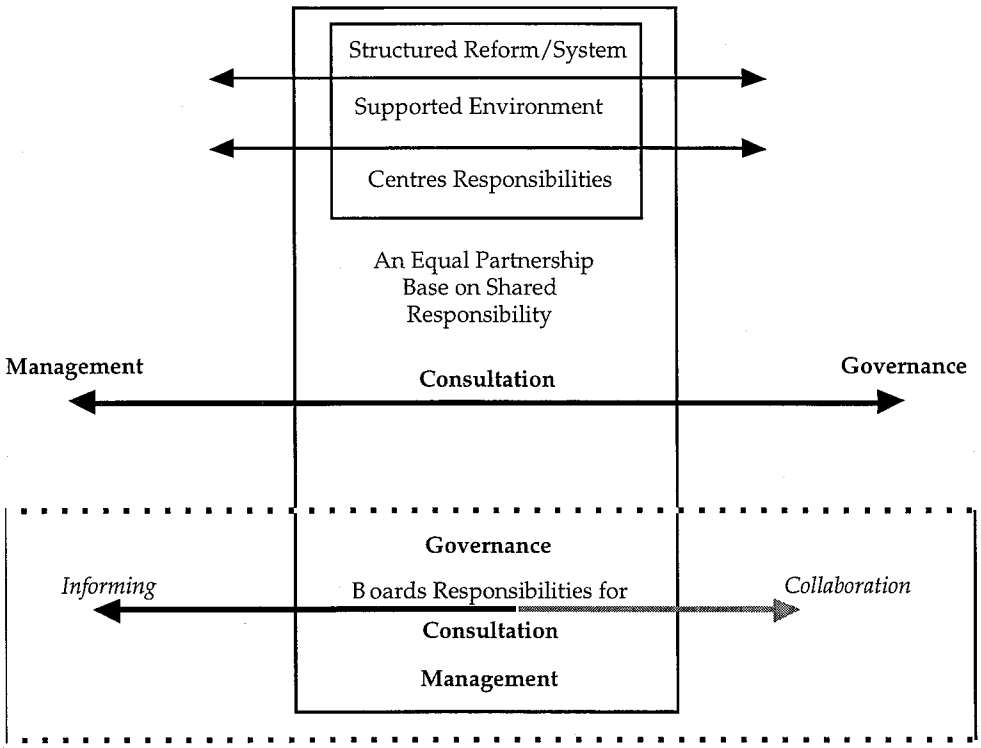

Figure 6 Outline of the overall model representing the mediation of governance and management via consultation at both the micro and macro levels

The model is an attempt to show how the boards make sense of their role as trustees. Their ability to meet school needs is influenced by many factors but it would appear that it is the development of some form of governance -management within the relationships that the boards have at both the macro and micro -levels that have the biggest input.

The model attempts to bring the macro-level and micro-level features of the system together. There are a number of groups that bind the macro and the micro together who are not signatories of the charter and therefore are not formally part of the partnership. The STA, as the supposed collective voice of the boards, who can "speak" to the centre, and the ERO, which is the centre's monitoring mechanism for ensuring that boards are meeting requirements are two such elements that mediate the macro and micro levels.

Evaluation of the model in terms of the policy sociology literature.

The model now reflects the culmination of drawing on detailed micro-level research and attempting to show how the expectations of trustees' and the outcomes of the reforms have come together to provide information about trustees' understanding of the reforms. It is now appropriate to reconsider some of the theoretical literature and evaluate the process and model in the light of what other researchers have been saying about macro-micro issues in policy sociology. This section will outline

> how people formulated, implement, mediate and oppose policies which seek to bind together social systems in time and space, by drawing on rules and resources in particular locales. (Shilling, 1992, pp. 79-80)

To do this I will use the ideas about governance and management as conceptualised at the macro and micro levels to elaborate on the duality of structure as theorised by Giddens (see chapter 1). Firstly, the way the macro and micro levels have been differentiated reflects my understanding of the system rather than claiming it is the reality. However, the reconstruction of the system via the reforms reinforces the salience of the boundary between the two. This has become more prominent as the Ministry closed its offices so that it has less institutional representation at the local or micro level. The Ministry has comes to be represented by the Head Office or the person seen as in charge; in this case it is more often the Minister rather than the chief executive officer. The boards' perceptions of the Ministry as withdrawing to the centre was evident in the data. The other aspect of the system that supports the differentiation is the large number of schools in relation to the centre.[50]

Giddens conceptualising of agency as involving discursive and practical consciousness which is the basis of people's capabilities as agents is reflected in the trustees' attainment of autonomy. As the boards were new

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[50]There were over 2600 primary, secondary and area schools in 1991 and 11 district offices plus head office

institutions at the time of the study there was more discursive consciousness data available then than will be present in the future when trustees have developed more "taken-for-granted" understandings about themselves as trustees and their roles as governors. Many of the trustees' expectations revealed the rules and resources they were expecting to draw on in interacting with the centre and at the local level. According to Giddens this reflects the trustees' need for ontological security. In the model this is shown by the boards' desire for certainty, fairness and structure in the new organisation of schooling, and a belief that working voluntarily to meet school needs is a worthwhile activity. Some of the rules that would be applied in the enactment and reproduction of social practices are based on trustees' conceptualisations of consultation, equal partnership, shared responsibility including structured reforms and supported environments, consultation and representation, autonomy, governance and management, and administration. In the case of resources trustees would make use of such things as their charter, the POD, the Ministry and the knowledge of how schools are run. These rules and resources provide the structures which are both the medium and the outcomes of interaction at the micro level and between the school and the centre at the macro level.

I will now use the example of governance and management to show how the process of structuration occurs within the educational system at both the micro and macro level. At the macro level there has been established a relationship between boards and the centre that is symbolised by the charter. This was meant to set out the responsibilities of each partner. The amount of direction from the centre to the boards suggests that the relationship was one of the centre governing and the boards managing. The maintenance of the relationship over time reproduces the rules and resources that both parties use. The power relations are reciprocal with the centre requiring the boards to manage the schools locally while the boards require the centre to provide funds to allow the boards to meet school needs. The interaction reproduces the structural principles of the relationship and reconfirms the rules and resources involved, but not necessarily expected.

The rules drawn on by both parties are a matter of struggle or tension based on each attempting to establish their preferred social positions. As

shown, the notions of consultation at this level can vary with the boards' expectations that the centre will provide direction on some matters and support autonomy on others. The rules of fairness are alluded to by trustees when the central authorities break the rules or over-ride the boards' autonomy on certain issues. Many times the boards have not been able to get the Ministry to reverse its decisions such as the unilateral decision to alter the charter but there are often compromises. The paramount principle initially deleted from the charter was able to be re-entered by boards within another part of the document but it was not to remain the central feature of the document as it had been previously. Those boards that demonstrated their disapproval of the centre by refusing to sign the charter soon found the centre resorting to its resource - with-holding funding - in order to bring about compliance. Bulk funding was an issue where the centre, in failing to implement the policy when it first attempted to do so, re-introduced it in another form as the bulk funding of management salaries.

There were times when the boards had some success at overturning decisions, such as the re-instatement of first year teachers in above-establishment positions. In this case there were legal resources that the NZEI - a group that medicates between the macro and the micro levels - were able to draw on to convince the centre to change its decision. It was the NZEI who produced the resource which "reproduced" the type of relationship between the centre and the boards that the boards' were continually seeking.[51] The centre's dominance in the partnership is demonstrated by its ability to choose not to reproduce the relationship as the boards would like - that is follow the rules - but on certain matters change the interaction to suit itself. That the boards continue to interact actually reproduces the rule that allows the centre to continue what appears to be an abuse of the partnership. The duality of the structures is that the rules and resources are the medium for the interaction as well as

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[51]Note that this was not the NZEI's main goal but rather an unintended consequence of supporting the teachers concerned. This shows how other groups may have power to reproduce the relationships of others, and reveals that the system is not closed but can be influenced through a complex set of interactions.

the outcome. One of the outcomes is a movement away from the type of relationship that trustees may have first been expecting with the centre, to one that reflects many of the notions of agency theory. This includes decentralisation rather than devolution, monitoring by ERO on behalf of the centre with a focus on summative rather than formative evaluation , and the assumption that boards will be opportunistic. This is in contrast to what trustees were expecting, so why is there still a relative amount of enthusiasm shown by trustees as volunteers to participate in schools?

The reason is that despite the centre's attempts to implement a policy based on agency theory it has not been replicated at the local level. Boards do not reproduce the same relationship within their schools that they have with the centre. Both the research presented here, and other studies reviewed, have been able to capture the discursive consciousness of trustees which is the articulation of the type of participation that they desire. At the present time the trustees are able to reproduce the types of structures they desire at the school level in order to meet the schools' needs as they perceive them. The high levels of trustee-satisfaction shown in the research reflect the positive success of the reforms in this regard. Despite the perceived success of the reforms, there are a large number of qualifications made by the trustees. This suggests that there is a definite tension between what is happening at the macro-level and what is happening at the micro-level. The implication is that there is no guarantee that trustees will always be able to "carve out" localised forms of governance and management that "gets things done" the way they prefer.

This formulation of structure and agency means that nothing is so systematised that it cannot be changed, but at the same time people's capabilities are always being shaped by the very rules and resources that they and others create. It will be apparent that one of the strengths of the model is also its limitation. The model has been built up from trustees' views and expectations. This usually involves the identification of the centre as very unified. However, there are other groups that might create a separate level in between the centre and the boards - consisting of such organisations as ERO, SES, NZEI, STA, pressure groups such as the Education Forum, and local Ministry offices. The centre itself is treated as a singular entity - the Ministry and the Minister its leader. This conceptualisation is structured into the model but the question must now

be considered as to how unified the Ministry is? No doubt it has its own internal relationships that must also be understood in order to gain a better understanding of policy processes occurring, especially in relation to the development of policy. The trajectory studies described by Maguire and Ball (1994) attempt to take these factors into account.

The placement of the Ministry at the centre also down plays the other groups in our wider society that have an input into educational policy. The government is sometimes recognised as having an input especially at budget time. The state services commission and the treasury are also salient at differing times but because they do not have such a direct relationship with boards it is difficult to see how they contribute to the production and reproduction of the rules and resources of the Ministry. Boston (1991) has shown that there are many similarities between what has happened in education and other public sectors in New Zealand. Codd's distinction between conjunctural and structural policy as strategies of attempting to contain the fiscal crisis can also be elaborated upon in the light of changes to educational policy.

While the model developed in this study cannot elaborate on these it does provide a connecting point with macro theory that has not been available previously. It also demonstrates how ineffective many of the macro level changes are at influencing micro-level institutions. Using Gidden's (1976) theory of structuration it is possible to show that the power of the structures at the macro level are not absolute and that people, such as trustees, are not over-determined but rather are very good creating the social space necessary to achieve some of their own goals. And at the same time it also reveals the continuing nature of the tension and sometimes struggle involved in maintaining that space. Stability and sameness are not the status quo by virtue of people doing nothing but rather are the result of people actively producing and reproducing the rules and resources within relationships over time.

In terms of policy sociology this research fits into Maguire and Ball's (1994) category of trajectory study by showing the complexity of policy implementation involving ongoing conflict and mediations by all parties involved. At the same time it makes use of deconstructing many of the concepts that trustees and the policy documents use in reproducing the

rules of the relationships, a feature of the category Maguire and Ball refer to as implementation studies. It may also be seen as the inversion of Ozga's (1987) middle term theories which involve qualitative research testing macro theoretical conceptions in micro-settings.

The concern in the current study has instead been to elaborate on policy implementation from the perspective of the bottom of the supposed "top-down" process that is usually implied by the term implementation. What is revealed is that policy implementation is mediated through the reproduction of the rules and resources of the relationships involved in the partnerships. Some trustees "resist" policy such as bulk funding not because they dislike the policy per se but because it would restrict their autonomy to achieve their own goals within the school setting. Other trustees were shown to actively oppose bulk funding not only because they thought it would prevent them from achieving their own goals but because the centre was not following rules of "implementation" based on a collaborative partnership. Their resistance was a message back to the centre to reproduce the correct form of consultation as defined by the boards' expectations. This is an example of the boards using the power inherent in their own resources to influence the centre.

The implications for people at the centre responsible for bulk funding policy would be that the reasons for people "resisting" the policy are varied and that the way to introduce it successfully may take many forms. Important also is that policy is not something "done to" people, especially when you rely on those people to carry out tasks on your behalf. This reflects the dialectic of control which focuses on the interdependence of those concerned. The "done to" approach of policy ignores the number of times that trustees found the policy allowed them to participate in schools in ways that had not been available previously. Trustees will not always resist but may actively encourage the centre to initiate a range of policies to further support boards. This idea supports Riseborough's (1993) contention that the provision of state education is a two-sided relationship.

One of the challenges for macro theorists is to resist the tendency to over generalise. While micro theorists may not do this on the same scale as macro theorists there is still a tendency for this to occur at the micro level.

For example, the research demonstrates not all parents, trustees, teachers and principals are satisfied with the reforms or feel that change has been for the better. How does the theorist cope with the variation without getting caught up with reducing the whole into many parts again. This is where the research methodology requires further refinements. How many trustees in a school need to have the same view before I can legitimately say that the board believes such and such? But when that happens the study turns to quantitative issues and it might well be in this area of study that qualitative studies will find answers to some of these questions.

Evaluation of the study and future directions for research

The purpose of the previous section of the chapter has been to examine the model in the light of structuration theory and policy sociology. The use of ethnography has provided the opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding of how boards of trustees operate. It should be acknowledged that this study was limited to the primary sector and as other research has already shown there are differences between the operation of secondary and primary schools that are becoming evident as a result of the reforms (Mitchell et al, 1993). The intention of providing the level of data in chapters four through to six was in order to present the intensity, complexity and range of the focal concerns that trustees were working through. Access to busy groups is always difficult and it is difficult to know when one has an adequate understanding of a board so that one can say "I know what is happening here". Furthermore the fast pace of change occurring at the time may also make the study a historical one. In 1995 there will be new elections for trustees and there are likely to be very few of the same trustees present on the new boards who were elected onto the first boards.

But as with all such qualitative studies there are limitations based on the restricted amount of data collected - in this case from the small number of boards studied. You will also note that many of the quotes provided in this thesis from the study come from the two schools where the board meetings were recorded onto tape. The amount of data that provides in comparison to the other three boards where recording was limited to notes is overwhelming and I suspect that much of my understanding may have been skewed with an over-reliance on the data from those two

boards that were taped. Note taking as a form of data gathering would be more suitable for testing the model.

Even when taking account of the other studies reviewed there are not more than 25 schools involved in qualitative forms of data gathering - approximately one per cent of the total schools in New Zealand. Thus while the model developed seems to account well for a wide range of data available, it is yet to be tested on a larger sample to establish its reliability. It should be possible to construct a survey questionnaire that could target a much larger range of schools. Although having seen how boards prioritise their correspondence and the workload pressures they are under I suspect that a mailed survey would not have the response rate that might be needed to make it a success.

It is difficult to know what would be the best way to study boards of trustees without imposing on them and distracting them from their task at hand. Researchers must be careful not to impose themselves on the boards without being able to contribute something back to the boards in some way. It is useful then to consider if this study, or the many others that have or are now being undertaken, are in a position to actually contribute something to the trustees who are busy running schools. In the context of the reformulated politicization of educational administration it could be suggested that research does not have anything to offer immediately to trustees to make their job any easier.

Those that might benefit from reading research such as this are the policy makers. It would seem that they do not understand the many complexities that the boards are working through or they themselves, in dealing with their own complexities, find they must ignore those more distant from themselves. The value of the model is that it provides a heuristic device for developing testable hypotheses about policy implementation at the periphery. It allows for links to be made with macro theories but as mentioned previously because it has been developed from the expectation of trustees it does not elaborate on what is happening within the agencies at the centre. The model itself reflects more of a middle range theory rather than a true macro-micro model. But it should be possible to move beyond the middle range to the broader macro areas which are more distant in relation to schools. A lot more could be said in outlining the

connections identified within the model to the macro but could not be done here without making the study much larger. As you will notice there is not a section in the study that outlines the macro context in detail as would be required to continue the analysis further. One approach to take would probably be to attempt to bring the many micro elements together and show how they interact within the whole rather than separate out the macro and the micro when theorising. This would still seem to be possible in the context of structuration theory. The challenge for the theorist is finding ways to be able to conceptualise many different micro settings within one model so as to avoid over generalising.

The amount of change involved in the restructuring of the former Department resulting in the new Ministry deserves study in its own right. There was mention above about possible accounts of the motives and goals of those at the centre. The education system is not closed and it may well be that the model has ignored other important parties at the local level influencing board operations. The model does account for local concerns as they form the basis of the boards' attempts to meet schools needs.

The importance of the concepts of governance and management to the literature reviewed and the model which has been developed points to the desirability of further research based on participant observation in order to understand the factors involved within schools. The principal's position, as a staff member and trustee, is critical to the success and the stability of the partnership between the trustees and the staff. The work of Gordon et al. (1994) and Mitchell et al. (1993) and this study, all point to the importance of the principal to find the right kind of leadership to mediate between the staff and trustees. Another major problem the principal has is maintaining continuity during periods of succession. As elections approach in 1995 one wonders if the learning patterns for the new trustees will repeat that of the first trustees. Are trustees building up an organisational memory where a whole range of collective memories reside? In twenty years time it will be interesting to see what themes from the reforms started in 1989 have left a residual after glow that will continue to influence the relationship between the centre and the boards.

In terms of policy sociology, the model developed here suggests that in order to understand the macro relationships researchers need to explore some of the other micro settings. I am not referring to the research which Ball (1990) has undertaken to reveal what some of the high profile people in policy were concerned about when they were involved in policy making. This is not to say that elite studies do not provide valuable insights but rather it is the studies of district offices, ground floor personnel at head office and the many intervening groups between the macro and the micro that are absent from research. As in other areas, research tends to get "done to" subjects, people who are in less of a position to say no. Those higher up the policy hierarchy will be able to keep their world separate from the researched one.

Ideally one is tempted to say that the model presented here may challenge policy makers to consider their own position within the scheme of things. But the cynic in me also says an understanding of people whom one is trying to control can increase the negative abuse of power as much as bring about any benefits. The question to consider on this point is whether we are all in this together? Why were the trustees getting involved in schools? It was their great desire to do something for the children. If those others at the centre are in education for the same reasons as the trustees then they must endeavour to show it. The adoption of agency theory as a management strategy will tend to distance the centre from the trustees and prevent any feeling of togetherness. But inviting parents as volunteers into a process where many of their expectations about the centre are not being met risks alienating a large number of voters, thus creating negative feeling and a new legitimation crisis. The trustees definitely see a role for a group to provide a supported environment for boards to make best use of their autonomy. What they are looking for, I would suggest, is leadership that shows vision and vitality; i.e. leadership that shares the same feeling of wanting to get involved for the children that parents are willing to show and also leadership that does not control or manage but supports trustees "autonomy" to govern.

Epilogue

A hypothetical discussion between the Minister of Education and a new trustee elected to a board in 1995.

Trustee: So what is this governance - management thing all about then?

Minister: Well, as a duly elected representative of your community, you now have responsibility for achieving goals in your school charter that was developed at the beginning of the reforms. You will do this by ensuring that the principal and staff fulfil their management roles by implementing your school policies.

Trustee: Okay, I think I understand that. Myself and the other trustees are governors working with the staff and principal to run the school. So why do you keep referring to self - management? And how is it that only those who opted into the bulk funding trial are self - managing?

Minister: Let me say that all schools are self managing, but some have more choice than others because they have control of their teaching grant.

Trustee: But I thought that the decision-making we do at board meetings was governing. How can we be both self - managing and involved in governance?

Minister: In the same way the staff at your school manage the implementation of your policies, you are managing the policies from the Ministry.

Trustee: So you govern us? But how can we govern if you are telling us how to manage.

Minister: We set only very broad guidelines in order to maintain national standards. How you meet those is your decision.

Trustee: But doesn't that mean the more you give us to do, the more management we are involved in? Will we have time to govern or will we be too busy managing?

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Legislation

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Appendix A

Date

Name
Board of Trustees
School
Address
Dunedin

Dear Sir,

I am a graduate student with the Education Department at Otago University. I am hoping to collect information for my Master of Arts thesis which is based on studying the various ways Boards of Trustees go about their various tasks. I anticipate attending 5 consecutive Board of Trustees meetings of 10 schools around Dunedin in order to do this. This work will be closely supervised by Dr Peter Rich, a senior lecturer at Otago University and the study has been scrutinized and passed by the Research and Ethics Committee in the Education Department

In order to obtain information I would like to audio-tape the Board of Trustee meetings which are open to public at the same time as take written notes. I hope this would not be an inconvenience to you. Information obtained would not be used beyond the study and I welcome the opportunity to discuss the work that I am doing. I believe that the Board of Trustees are a crucial component of change if the recent educational reforms are to succeed and I am interested in studying their operation and development. Ultimately I would hope that the results of my research would be of interest and use to those schools and Boards of Trustees involved and maybe beyond.

Thank you for your time,

Yours sincerely,

Michael Gaffney

Appendix B

Date

Dear *Name*

After a long period I have finished the first part of my study and I am sending to you a summary of how I viewed your activities as I saw them at the meetings that I attended in 1991. I attended the meetings of April, May, June, July, August and the AGM. As you are aware although I sat in on the meetings I was never part of the group and so this meant that there are things I may have misunderstood. In order to overcome this and avoid misrepresenting the board it would be appreciated if you could make some comments on my summary. The board made decisions about which I am not sure of the outcome or how they were arrived at and so I am not able to give a complete and proper account of them. If you could supply some of the details it would also be appreciated. **This report and your comments will not appear, as is, in my final thesis but rather will provide the basis for me to develop a thesis.**

There are several ways you could respond to the following. You may like to leave it as it stands. You may like to make written comments or you might like to respond to the summary through an open-ended interview situation. At present I have not analysed my information in order to make a consistent comparison between the five schools I am studying but rather I am still at the point of making sure that my original data are accurate.

Throughout the report that follows I will leave boxes in which you might like to put your responses. Should this space prove insufficient then please write on the back of the same page. There are a number of sections that follow. The first is a short summary of school statistics, the second is the format of the meetings I attended, the third is a brief paragraph that outlines the types of activities that I observed the board taking part in and the fourth is a summary of events or concerns about which the board spent time in discussion.

I can be contacted through these phone numbers:
(work)
(home)

or mail sent:
Education Department
Otago University
P.O. Box 56
Dunedin

Yours sincerely

Michael Gaffney